TRACES OF GANDHĀRAN BUDDHISM

An Exhibition of Ancient Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection

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Jens Braarvig and Fredrik Liland

With contributions by:
Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Kazunobu Matsuda, Richard Salomon, Lore Sander

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Contents

PREFACE
Acknowledgements ix
Foreword, H.H. Somdet Phra Buddhacharya x
Foreword, Jens Braarvig xiii
Conventions and abbreviations xv

INTRODUCTION
Gandhāra xvii
The Origin of the Manuscripts xviii
The Scripts xxi
The Manuscript Project xxiii

The Schøyen Collection in Context, Jens-Uwe Hartmann xxvi
On the Importance of the BMSC, Kazunobu Matsuda xxviii
An Analysis of the Scripts, Lore Sander xxx
Kharoṣṭhī Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection, Richard Salomon xxxiii

THE MANUSCRIPTS
1. Āgama Sūtra
- Caṅgīsūtra 2
- Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra 6
- Andhasūtra, Sūtra on the Three Moral Defects of Devadatta, and Kauvikumārāvadāna 10
- Śikhālasūtra 14

2. Mahāyāna Sūtra
- Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā 18
- The Mahāyāna Sūtra Manuscript 22
- Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā 26

3. Vinaya
- Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga 32
- Karmavācanā 38
- On the Qualifications of a Vinayadhara 42

4. Abhidharma
- Śāriputra-Abhidharma 46
- A Commentary on the Mahāsamājasūtra 50
- Fragments of an Early Commentary 52

5. Avadāna
- The Aśoka Legend 58
- Jyotiṣkāvadāna 62
- Avadānaśataka 66

6. Miscellaneous
- A Bactrian Buddhist Manuscript 72
- A Mīmāṃsaka Among the Buddhists 74
- Buddhastotras of Mātṛceṭa 78
- Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā 82
- An Unusual *ye dharmā* Formula 86
- A Jar with a Kharoṣṭhī Inscription 88
- A Fragment of a Play 90
- A Copper Scroll Inscription 92

APPENDIX
Bibliography 100

Acknowledgements

It is with great joy that we present this catalogue of a selection of the Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection (BMSC) to the public. It serves the purpose of a companion to the first exhibition of these invaluable manuscripts to be held at the Buddhamonthon park at Nakhon Pathom, Thailand from November 2010 to February 2011. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to His Holiness Somdet Phra Buddhacharya, President of the Executive Committee for the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, the Supreme Sangha Council and the Thai National Buddhist Affairs, whose steadfast commitment and generous support have made this exhibition possible. We would also in particular like to thank the Norwegian Institute of Palaeography and Historical Philology for the invaluable role it has played as the Norwegian counterpart in this joint venture.

The manuscripts presented here may be dated to the period between the second and the eight century A.D., and most of them were probably found in the Bāmiyān valley, part of the ancient kingdom of Gandhāra, in what is today north-eastern Afghanistan. It is a great reward to Buddhist scholarship that these fragile manuscripts have been so well preserved that they may still inform and inspire us even today. For this we may thank the meticulous work of the monk-scribes, they way in which they preserved these texts in earthen jars, and the favourable dry climate of Afghanistan. Today these treasures are in the custody of Martin Schøyen who has generously made his large collection of manuscripts available to the scholarly world, thereby greatly enhancing our understanding of the history of Buddhism.

The authors would like to express their particular gratitude to the Venerable Phra Dhamsitthinayok of Wat Sraketrajavaramahavihara, Bangkok. We would also like to thank Mr. Siam Saenkhat who has been in charge of communications with our hosts in Thailand, and has provided translations of materials into the Thai language.

Arthur Sand and Kirsten Berrum of the University of Oslo have generously contributed their services within their respective fields: Mr. Sand helped us with issues related to images and printing, while Mrs. Berrum has contributed her expertise in matters related to visual presentation. She has also produced the map of Gandhāra on page xvii.

The beautiful images of Gandhāran art that illustrate the book were generously provided by the Preussian Cultural Foundation, and the originals can be enjoyed at the Museum of Asian Art, Berlin (see page xv for details).

The members of the BMSC project group – Professors Paul Harrison, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Kazunobu Matsuda, and Lore Sander – have been an invaluable help throughout the work with the manuscripts, providing images, written material, and advice. The photographs on pages xxiv-xxix were kindly provided by Kazunobu Matsuda.

A particular thanks must go to all the scholars involved in the Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection project. They are too many to be named here, but their respective contributions are noted in relation to each particular manuscript presented in this book. It is our sincere hope that these short presentations will do justice to their work. For any mistakes we are of course solely responsible.

Oslo, August 2010
Jens Braarvig and Fredrik Liland

Preface

ปฏิบัติตามพระพุทธจริยา

การจัดทำสิ่งใดสิ่งหนึ่งที่เป็นประโยชน์ และต้องการให้มั่นคง ยืนนาน เป็นความคิดที่ดี เป็นกุศล และเมื่อคิดดังที่กล่าว พร้อมทั้งทำให้ปรากฏ กล่าวได้ว่า เป็นการปฏิบัติตามพระพุทธจริยา ดังที่ทราบกันโดยทั่วไปแล้ว คือ เมื่อองค์สมเด็จพระสัมมาสัมพุทธเจ้า ได้ตรัสรู้พระธรรมอันประเสริฐสูงสุดยิ่งแล้ว ได้ทรงปฏิบัติเพื่อความตั้งมั่นแห่งพระธรรม และประโยชน์อันไพศาลกว้างขวาง พระธรรมอันประเสริฐสูงสุดยิ่ง จึงได้ตกทอดมาถึงพุทธศาสนิกชนในปัจจุบัน

ในโอกาสที่มหาเถรสมาคม อนุมัติให้สำนักงานพระพุทธศาสนาแห่งชาติ ประสานงานกับท่านเจ้าคุณพระธรรมสิทธินายก ผู้ช่วยเจ้าอาวาสวัดสระเกศ และศาสตราจารย์ ดร.เจนส์ โบรกวิก, มิสเตอร์เฟรดริก ลิลแลนด์ แห่งสถาบันอนุรักษ์สเคอเยน ประเทศนอร์เวย์ จัดพิธีอัญเชิญพระธรรมเจดีย์ และจัดแสดงนิทรรศการคัมภีร์โบราณ ของสถาบันอนุรักษ์สเคอเยน ประเทศนอร์เวย์ ณ พุทธมณฑล จังหวัดนครปฐม นั้น กล่าวได้ว่า **เป็นการปฏิบัติตามพระพุทธจริยา** และได้สร้างบารมีที่สำคัญอีกครั้งหนึ่ง

อนึ่ง บริษัทอมรินทร์พริ้นติ้งแอนด์พับลิชชิ่ง จำกัด (มหาชน) ได้จัดพิมพ์หนังสือตามรอยธรรมแห่งคันธาระ จากสถาบันอนุรักษ์สเคอเยน เพื่อเป็นที่ระลึก และถวายเป็นพุทธบูชา ในการจัดแสดงนิทรรศการ ครั้งนี้

จึงขออนุโมทนาสาธุการ ชื่นชม ยินดี เป็นอย่างยิ่ง ไว้ ณ โอกาสนี้ด้วย.

สมเด็จพระพุฒาจารย์

(สมเด็จพระพุฒาจารย์)
ประธานคณะผู้ปฏิบัติหน้าที่สมเด็จพระสังฆราช
วัดสระเกศ

Foreword

Following the Way of the Buddha

Any conduct that is wholesome, firm, and enduring will bring benefit and merit. When acting in this manner one can say that one is following the Way of the Buddha. As we know, the Buddha attained Enlightenment and taught the Four Noble Truths. He established the Teaching for the benefit of all, and his noble tenets have been handed down through history to the Buddhist generations of today.

On this occasion the Thai Senior Buddhist Monks's Council has given their approval to the Thai National Buddhist Affairs to collaborate with the Most Venerable Phra Dhamsitthinayok, the assistant abbot of Wat Sraket, Prof. Jens Braarvig, Mr. Fredrik Liland, and The Schøyen Collection, Norway, in bringing Buddhist scriptures and hold an exhibition of Buddhist manuscripts from the Schøyen Collection at Buddhamonthon, Nakon Pathom Province. This important occasion can undoubtedly be considered practical worship of the way of the Buddha, and is indeed a significant event.

To mark this occasion, and in honour of the Buddha, Amarin Printing and Publishing Public Co. Ltd. is launching this supplementary catalogue entitled *Traces of Gandhāran Buddhism: An Exhibition of Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection*.

With sincere appreciation I hereby offer my congratulations.

His Holiness Somdet Phra Buddhacharya
President of the Executive Committee for the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand
Wat Sraket

Foreword

The heritage of the Buddha is indeed important and valuable – thus what he has left us is called *ratanattaya*, the "Three Riches" or the "Three Jewels". These are the ideal of the Buddha himself, then it is his teachings, and of course the congregation of monks, which has taken care of and guarded the Buddha's teachings through the almost two and a half millennium since he lived.

During this long period of time the teachings of the Buddha has helped, inspired and given innumerable people comfort and peace in all kinds of life situations, and it has helped preserve humanity and dignity in adverse situations. In the teachings of Buddhism one talks about two "bodies" of the Buddha – one is the body in which he was present in the world during his corporeal life, the *rūpakāya*, and the other the body of his teachings, his *dharmakāya*. The last mentioned body, which is the presence of the Buddha after his *nirvāṇa*, is represented also in scriptures – thus writing and texts were always important throughout the history of Buddhism, wherever it was spread, to keep the teachings of the Lord continually communicated to everyone.

And it is thus an important task to help preserve this *dharmakāya* of the Buddha, to help promulgating his teachings as time passes. So we should help guarding the Buddhist scriptures, wherever they are found, and in whichever form, and make them available to a greater public. It is thus very meaningful to display the remains of the some of the oldest written testimonies of Buddhism, as those found in this exhibition – being really part of the Buddha's *dharmakāya*. The manuscripts as here displayed were found in Afghanistan, in Bāmiyān near by the great Buddhas which once were there, and where ancient Buddhist kingdoms once ruled. We all should hope that this unhappy and war-torn country will regain its peace.

We would like to express our great thankfulness to the Supreme Sangha Council and the Thai National Buddhist Affairs, that made it possible to produce this exhibition, and created a splendid venue for it to take place.

Jens Braarvig
Oslo, 27th April 2010

Conventions

Description of a fragment:
recto and verso, abbreviated r and v, if a fragment is identified
A and B, if the beginning cannot be decided

Symbols:

( )	restorations in a gap
[ ]	damaged akśara(s)
< >	omission of (part of) an akśara without gap in the ms.
<< >>	interlinear insertion
{ }	superfluous (part of an) akśara
+	one destroyed akśara
~<number>+	approximate number of lost akśaras, e.g. ~60+
..	one illegible akśara
.	illegible part of an akśara
...	indefinite number of lost akśaras
///	beginning or end of a fragment when broken
*	virāma
'	avagraha, not added in transliteration, but added without brackets in reconstruction (note, however, 'pi and pi)
ḫ	upadhmānīya
ḫ	jihvāmūlīya
❁	double circle with rosette
○	string hole

Abbreviations

AN	Aṅguttara-Nikāya; Morris and Hardy (1885-1900).
BMSC	Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection; Braarvig (Braarvig, 2000-2006).
DN	Dīgha-Nikāya; Rhys Davids and Carpenter (1890–1911).
G	Gilgit Manuscripts; Dutt (1939-54).
It-a	Itivuttaka-Aṭṭhakathā Paramatthadīpanī; Bose (1934-36).
MN	Majjhima-Nikāya; Trenckner and Chalmers (1888-99).
Q	Peking (Qianlong) version of the Tibetan bKa' 'gyur; Suzuki (1957).
T	Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō 大正新修大藏經; Takakusu and Watanabe (1924–34).

Images of Gandhāran art

National Museums in Berlin
Prussian Cultural Foundation
Asian Art Museum, Art Collections of South, South East and Central Asian Art
-Large Buddha head (p.1), No. 43180; photography by Roman März.
-Standing Bodhisattva (p.17), No. 42119; photography by Iris Papadopoulos.
-Buddha Preaching (p.31), No. 42103; photography by Georg Niedermeiser.
-Meditating Monk (p.45), No. 40222; unknown photographer.
-Animals asking the Wise about what they fear most in life (p.57), No. 24453; photography by Iris Papadopoulos.
-Buddhist reliquary (p.71), No. 29738; unknown photographer.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Gandhāra

The Buddhist manuscripts of the Schøyen Collection are reported to have come from a cave near Bāmiyān, in central Afghanistan, and are dated to the time between the second and the eight centuries A.D. The label Greater Gandhāra has recently been coined, most notably by Richard Salomon (Salomon, 1999), for the area of influence within which Bāmiyān found itself at this point in history. It is therefore with reference to the ever changing history of the Gandhāran kingdoms and their culture that we will seek a common ground for understanding the environments within which these manuscripts were produced, read, and venerated.

Gandhāra is the ancient name of the Peshawar valley in what is today the Northwestern Frontier Region of Pakistan, between the Suleiman mountains along the Afghanistan border in the west, and the Indus river in the east. The Kingdom of Gandhāra is considered to have lasted from the first century B.C., until the eleventh century A.D., and to have attained its height under the Kuṣāṇa kings in the first to the fifth century A.D. Greater Gandhāra comprised the Swat valley to the north, the region around the great city of Taxila to the east, and the eastern edge of Afghanistan to the west. This area had a far-reaching influence in ancient times as the principal point of encounter of the Indian world to the east with the Iranian world to the west.

In general terms one can say that three main waves of immigration from the west have shaped the history of this region. First there were the Indo-Aryan immigrations that probably took place in the second millennium B.C., bringing with them the Vedic religion. In the centuries before and after the beginning of the Common Era came the conquests by Greeks, Scythians, Kuṣāṇas, and associated ethnic groups, creating cosmopolitan kingdoms of diverse ethnic origin, often heavily influenced by Hellenistic culture. After the fall of the Sassanid Empire to

the Arabs in the seventh century there was a growing Muslim pressure from the west. The so-called Muslim invasions, a series of Afghan, Turkish, and Mongol incursions, came between the eight and sixteenth centuries, and in this period the term Gandhāra is gradually no longer in use.

Buddhism is said to have been first introduced to the region around the third century B.C. by the emperor Aśoka, at which time Gandhāra was a part of the pan-Indian Mauryan kingdom ruled from Pāṭaliputra (modern day Patna). After the decline of this empire Buddhism was eagerly supported by the succeeding rulers of Gandhāra, the most famous being the second century Kuṣāṇa ruler Kaniṣka. At Puruṣapura (modern Peshawar) his capital still boasts the foundations of a truly colossal *stūpa*, originally nearly a hundred meters in diameter, and reliably reported to have been two hundred meters high.

Under the Kuṣāṇas Gandhāra became one the major centres of Buddhism in India. Kaniṣka seems to have revived Aśoka's policy of patronising the Buddhist Saṅgha, and at some point in this period Buddhism began to make its way beyond the borders of its Indian homeland to establish itself in parts of Persia and China. It was the Gandhāran form of Buddhism that was first encountered by the peoples in these parts of Asia, when monks began to travel along some of the routes that have so famously been labelled the Silk Road. Traditionally the route is supposed to have proceeded from Peshawar up the valley of the Kabul river, past Jalalabad, and on to Bāmiyān, before crossing the Hindu Kush into Bactria. In the opposite direction came Chinese pilgrims, such as the famous Xuanzang who visited Bāmiyān in 632 A.D., describing to us the impressive giant Buddhas carved into the side of the cliff that met him there.

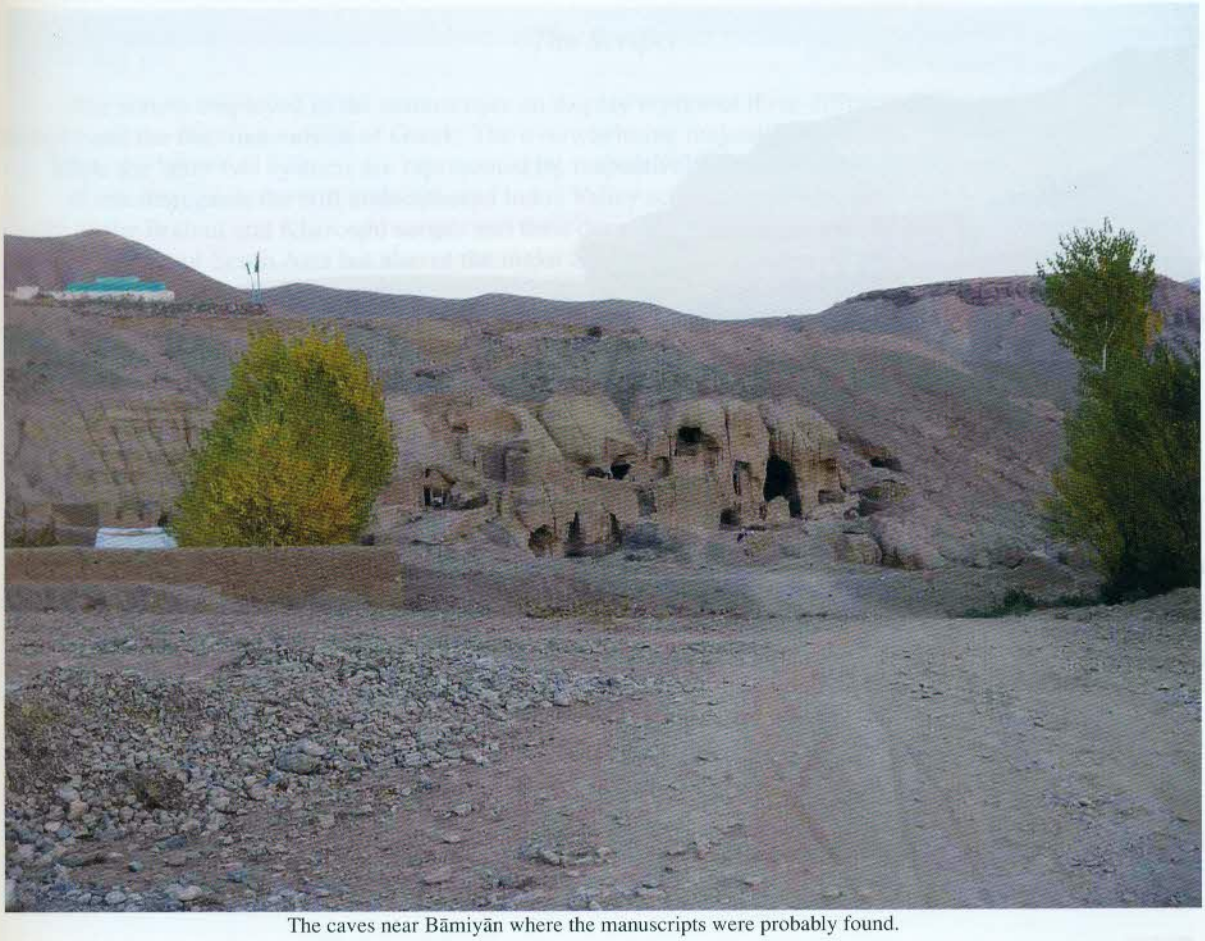
The language of Gandhāra has come to be known as Gāndhārī, one of the regional dialects of the Prakrit, or more precisely Middle Indo-Aryan, tongues spoken across India. It was from early times written in Kharoṣṭhī, a script adapted from the Aramaic employed in the Achamenian Empire of Persia. The earliest written records from the area are the multilingual rock and pillar inscriptions of Aśoka, employing the Kharoṣṭhī script, as well as Brāhmi and Greek. Some of the earliest of the Schøyen manuscripts, from the second century A.D., are written in Gāndhārī using the Kharoṣṭhī script. However, as is also illustrated by the collection here presented, this script was gradually abandoned for Brāhmi, and the written language developed towards a standardized Sanskrit, with an intermediate stage of semi-colloquial Sanskrit that has come to be known as Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit.

The manuscripts presented here is a selection from the Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection that have so far been analysed. They give us a glimpse of the genres of literature that were important for the Buddhist community of the area. The original nature of the collection is, however, uncertain. Based mainly on comparisons with Chinese translations, there are some indications that a sizable amount of texts in the collection belong to the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school. Can it then perhaps be considered part of a Buddhist canon of this school? Perhaps it was part of a library in a monastery belonging to this school in Bāmiyān? Such questions cannot be answered at the moment. It is however intriguing that Xuanzang did in fact report on the existence of [Mahāsāṃghika-]Lokottaravādin monasteries in Bāmiyān in the seventh century (Beal, 1884: 50). Much work is indeed needed if we are to connect all the events of the history of this influential region.

The Origin of the Manuscripts

The Buddhist manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection were according to scanty and partly confirmed information found by local people taking refuge from the Taliban forces in caves near the Bāmiyān valley, in Afghanistan, in 1993-95. There are certain indications, however, that some of the material come from other places. The manuscripts, which are mostly in fragments, were probably damaged already in the late seventh or early eight century A.D., since the latest examples of scripts in the collection are from this period. According to information passed on by the manuscript dealers, many manuscripts were further damaged when Taliban forces blew up a stone statue of the Buddha in one of the caves. Local people trying to save the manuscripts from the Tàliban were chased by them when carrying the manuscripts through passes in the Hindu Kush to the north of the Khyber Pass.

The first fragments of the collection were acquired by the Schøyen Collection in the summer of 1996 from the London bookseller Sam Fogg. The bulk of the material was acquired between 1997 and 2000. The collection comprises around 5,000 leaves and fragments, with around 7,000 micro-fragments, from a library of originally up to 1,000 manuscripts. They span from the second to the seventh century A.D., and are written on palm leaf, birch bark, leather and copper.



The caves near Bāmiyān where the manuscripts were probably found.

A certain effort has been made with regard to establishing the origin and the Buddhist school from which the material stem. Regrettably most of the information available about the physical origin is quite scanty, and any archaeological survey has up until now been difficult. One probable place of origin has, however, been suggested, as discussed below. The question of whether the collection represents a uniform body or canon that can be attributed to a particular sect has not been settled, although there are some clear indications. As the material spans over a time period of more than five hundred years it is quite unlikely that it was intended as a uniform canon as such. Also, some of the earlier manuscripts are imports, most likely written in what is today Pakistan and India. Certain manuscripts, notably the *Caṅgīsūtra*, *Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga*, and *Karmavācanā*, have, when compared to Chinese translations, been shown to exhibit clear indications of belonging to the Mahāsāṃghika sect, and possibly its Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin sub-sect. Such an affiliation for the collection as a whole has therefore been a working hypothesis, but so far no conclusion has been reached.

In October 2003 Mr. Kazuya Yamauchi of the National Research Institute of Cultural Properties, Tokyo, Japan, visited the Bāmiyān area. His findings and the photographs above were kindly presented to the manuscript project. Mr. Yamauchi went to Zargaran, a settlement some 1.2 km east of the site of the smaller of the two giant Buddha statues carved into the cliffs on the northern side of the Bāmiyān Valley, that were demolished by the Taliban in 2001. There he was told by villagers that about ten years before one of the caves had collapsed in an earthquake, revealing a large quantity of manuscript fragments which, when gathered together, made a pile approximately 10 cm high. Although the locals claimed to have burned them, it may be that not all of them were destroyed. It is therefore possible, though not absolutely certain, that a substantial proportion of the Buddhist manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection come from this location. Further archaeological work is required to confirm this as the findspot.

The Scripts

The scripts employed in the manuscripts on display represent three different writing systems: Brāhmī, Kharoṣṭhī and the Bactrian variant of Greek. The overwhelming majority use various versions of the Brāhmī script, while the latter two systems are represented by, respectively, two and one examples each.

If one disregards the still undeciphered Indus Valley script, the history of writing in India consists essentially of the Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī scripts and their derivatives. Brāhmī is the ultimate source not only of the indigenous scripts of South Asia but also of the major Southeast Asian scripts (Burmese, Thai, Lao, Khmer, etc.), of Tibetan, and of other Central Asian scripts no longer in use. The Kharoṣṭhī script on the other hand was essentially a regional script, used only in northwestern region of the Indian subcontinent, in what is today northern Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. It died out in ancient times.

The Greek script is represented by one leather manuscript written in Bactrian, an eastern Iranian language, and inscribed with the cursive Graeco-Bactrian script (no table represented here). The Bactrian language was employed in Bactria, in what is today the border region between Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, and the Bactrian cursive script was in use from the third to the ninth century A.D.

Brāhmī

The oldest datable records in Brāhmī are the rock and pillar inscriptions of the Mauryan emperor Aśoka, from the middle of the third century B.C. It has been suggested that the script was created during the Mauryan period, possibly under Aśoka himself. Its origin is controversial, the theories generally falling into two camps: that which sees it as a derivative of a Semitic prototype, whether Phoenecian, Arameic, or South Semitic, and that which views it as an indigenous Indian invention, often associated with the Indus Valley script. The latter theory is not supported by available data, and has mostly been abandoned. The Brāhmi has a characteristic diacritically modified consonant-syllabic structure, where each consonant is accompanied either by the internal vowel *a*, or an-

Aśokan Brāhmī; 3rd century B.C.

Kuśāṇa Brāhmī; 2st-3nd century A.D.

other vowel symbolized by one of several standard additions to the basic consonant. It is written from left to right (although some examples of the opposite have been found).

The Brāhmī scripts employed in the manuscripts illustrate the development of the script from the second to the eight century A.D. This development is here generally characterized in the displayed manuscripts by four sub-scripts of Brāhmī: Kuṣāṇa (1st-3rd century A.D.), Gupta (4th-6th century A.D.), and Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I (6th century A.D.) and II (7th-8th century A.D.). These, as well as their predecessor Aśokan Brāhmī, are represented in the script tables above and below.[1]

[1] The tables are extracted from Sander (1968).

Gupta Brāhmī, leading to the development of Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I; 5th century A.D.

Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type II; 7th-8th century A.D.

Kharoṣṭhī

Kharoṣṭhī evidently came into being as an adaptation of the Arameic script for Gāndhārī, the Middle Indo -Aryan dialect of the area of Gandhāra. The Aramaic script was widely used in the Achamenian Empire of Persia, and the area of Gandhāra was incorporated into this empire from the sixth to the fourth century B.C. The oldest datable records of Kharoṣṭhī are also from the rock and pillar inscriptions of Aśoka, and is well attested until the third century A.D. when it began to fall out of use in South Asia, replaced by derivatives of Brāhmī. It was also used for official documents and epigraphs in the Central Asian kingdoms of Khotan and Kroraina in the third and fourth centuries A.D., and appears to have survived in the cities of the northern Silk Route as late as the seventh century A.D.

Unlike Brāhmī it is written from right to left, and in contrast to the monumental appearance of early Brāhmī had a decidedly cursive look. It does not distinguish vowel quantity like Brāhmī does, and although there are a few specimens of Sanskrit written in Kharoṣṭhī, the script lacks characters for some Sanskrit sounds, such as diphthongs *ai* and *au*. An alternative character order known as "Arapacana", widespread in Buddhist tradition,

probably originated in association with Kharoṣṭhī (Salomon, 1990): *a ra pa ca na la da ba ḍa ṣa va ta ya ṣṭa ka sa ma ga tha ja śva (sva) dha śa kha kṣa sta jña rtha (ha, pha, ita) bha cha sma hva tsa (sta) gha ṭha ṇa pha ska ysa śca ṭa ḍha (sta).* In the table below the script is represented in the standard Indian character order.

a	i	u	e	o
ka	kha	ga	gha	
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa
ta	tha	da	dha	na
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma
ya	ra	la	va	
śa	ṣa	sa	ṣa	ha

Kharoṣṭhī; 1st-2nd century A.D.

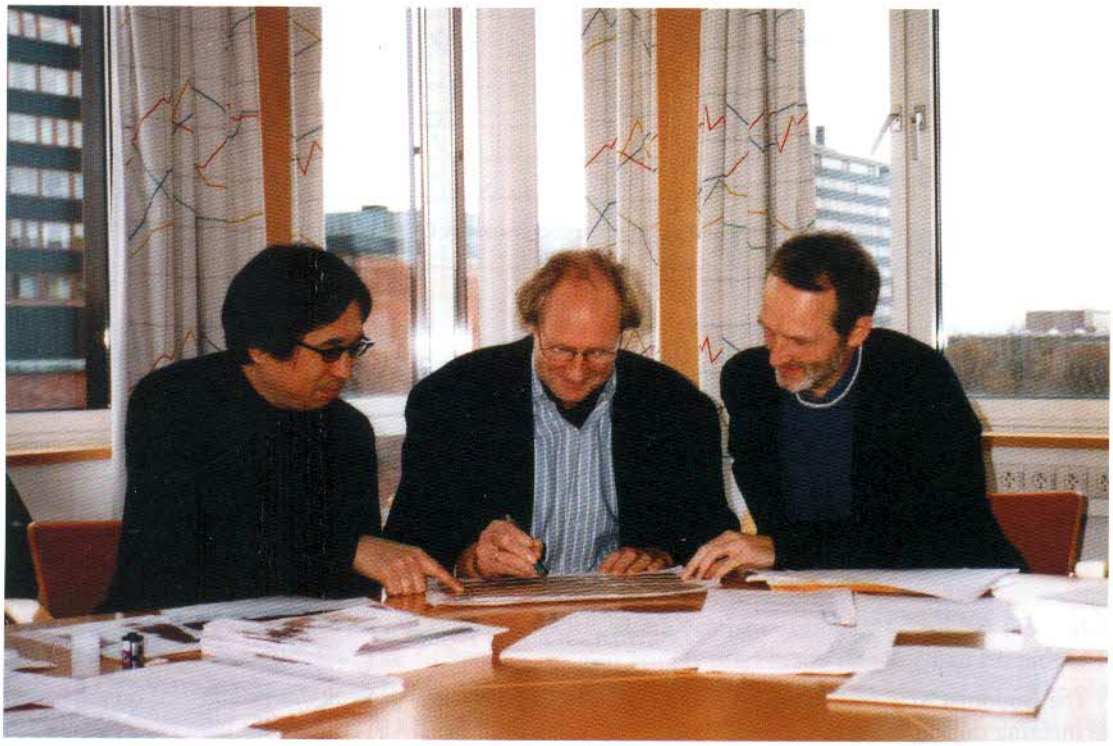
The Manuscript Project

The Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection (BMSC) project was established on the basis of an informal meeting during the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) conference held in Leiden in 1996. The initial project group consisted of professors Jens Braarvig (University of Oslo), Jens-Uwe Hartmann (Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich), Kazunobu Matsuda (Bukkyo University, Kyoto) and Lore Sander (Berlin), later joined by Paul Harrison (Stanford University). Formal arrangements with the owner of the collection, Martin Schøyen, was established in January of 1997, and the bulk of the initial work of systematization and cataloguing was carried out during a series of seminars held in Oslo, Berlin and Kyoto in the years 1997-1999.

Initially the leaves and fragments were systematized according to scripts and material, establishing that they probably dated from the period between the first and seventh centuries A.D. The first fragments to be identified with specific texts were some apparently belonging to the *Prajñāpāramitā*, later particularly identified as

belonging to the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, and the leaves belonging to the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā*. In identifying the manuscripts one relied upon other editions of the texts in Sanskrit and/or Pāli, and when these were no longer extant, on translations into Tibetan and/or Chinese. The Chinese translations were of particular importance as many of them were made already in the second century A.D., giving us indications of the developments and changes that have happened to a text, and (mostly with regard to *vinaya* material) the Buddhist sect it might belong to.

In presenting the manuscripts here we have relied on the work of analysing the texts carried out by various scholars and published in the series Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection (BMSC; Braarvig, 2000-2006). Each manuscript is accompanied by a description giving the background for the text, its origins, contents, etc. and a description of the manuscript as presented here, its material, script, date, special textual characteristics, etc. Along with a photographic reproduction of the manuscript we give the transliteration and/or a translation of the preserved sections (or in some cases translations of parallels). Largely due to the fragmentary nature of the manuscripts, translations of some have not been possible. In these cases the contents are abbreviated in the descriptive section. The interested reader is referred to the original published versions in the BMSC volumes for more detailed descriptions.



Kazunobu Matsuda, Jens Braarvig and Jens Uwe-Hartmann analysing the manuscripts at the University of Oslo, Norway.

The BMSC project group; from left to right: Kazunobu Matsuda, Lore Sander, Jens Uwe-Hartmann, Paul Harrison, and Jens Braarvig.

Introduction

The Schøyen Collection in Context

Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Ludwig Maximilian University

Compared to other classical cultures like Egypt or China, India was very late in creating its own writing system. Prior to the monumental rock inscriptions of king Aśoka in the middle of the third century B.C. there are no reliable indications for the existence of an indigenous script. All the major Indian religions originated considerably earlier, and thus they had to depend on an exclusively oral transmission for their continuously growing corpus of religious lore. Oral transmission facilitates the exclusion of those who are seen unfit for or unworthy of participation in the tradition, and in the case of the Vedic religion this led to an ongoing orality of the transmission. Contrary to that, the Buddha made a strong point of the exoteric nature of his teachings and their accessibility for everybody, independent of gender and social status, and it is quite likely that his followers were the first to recognize the many advantages of the art of writing. According to an historical tradition, the Buddhists in Sri Lanka started to write down their canonical texts in the first century B.C. when various calamities like war and famine threatened the continuity of the oral transmission.

This information from the southern edge of the Buddhist world is now corroborated by the new manuscript finds in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent. According to a radiocarbon dating of the latest finds, at least one manuscript may originate from the first century B.C. This makes it not only the oldest Buddhist, but by far also the oldest Indian manuscript presently known, and this is one of the many reasons why the recent finds from Pakistan and Afghanistan are considered so sensational. Taken all together they allow us to reconstruct some

A pile of inscribed birch bark fragments, illustrating the state in which some of the manuscripts were first presented to the project work group.

of the major developments of Buddhism in the area from the beginning of the Common Era up to the eighth or even the early ninth centuries.

Three times during the last hundred years our knowledge and our understanding of the early history of Buddhism has been decisively advanced by large manuscript finds. The first occurred in the beginning of the last century. When rumours of lost Buddhist cultures in Central Asia reached the West, explorers from several European countries went to the Tarim basin. They followed the ancient Silk Road, and in the ruins of long deserted monasteries and stupas they found an incredible amount of Buddhist cultural relics. Among them were ten thousands of Buddhist manuscripts written in a number of scripts and languages, but mostly reduced to mere fragments. The following decades saw scholars working hard, trying to decipher the fragments and to reconstruct the texts they contained. A comparatively high number of Sanskrit manuscripts proved that the original texts of several forms of Indian Buddhism were held in high esteem and continued to be used for various purposes, although the local scribes and owners spoke quite different languages. The earliest manuscripts were imports from India written on palm leaf in the second or third centuries A.D. All the others are local products written on paper and ranging from the 4th to probably the 10th or 11th centuries. Those found in the cave monasteries at the northern branch of the Silk Road mostly preserve literature of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda school, both canonical and non-canonical, while those coming from the southern branch contain Mahāyāna sūtras. The overwhelming majority of all those manuscripts from Central Asia contain texts the Sanskrit original of which had been lost in India. They are now kept in various collections in Berlin, London, Paris and St. Petersburg.

In the thirties of the last century another sensational manuscript treasure came to light. It was found in a ruined building near Gilgit in Northern Pakistan, and it consisted of several dozens of Sanskrit manuscripts, a few complete, but again many of them in a more or less fragmentary condition. Yet, their state of preservation was much better than that of the Central Asian manuscripts, and this facilitated research and publication. While many of the fragments from the Silk Road still await to be studied and published, nearly all of the so-called Gilgit texts have been made accessible through scholarly editions. They convey an interesting picture of the form of Buddhism practiced in the area between the fifth and the seventh centuries: Regarding the vinaya, it was the version of the Mūlasarvāstivādins that was followed by the local monastics, and a number of manuscripts preserve Jātaka stories that belong to the narrative lore of the same school. On the other hand, there is a fairly high number of manuscripts containing Mahāyāna sūtras, some of them clearly used for apotropaic purposes. It has to be assumed, then, that the local Buddhist community drew on various traditions for specific purposes and that their monks combined the monastic code of a school of earlier Buddhism with the views and the dogmatics of the Mahāyāna in a fashion very similar to the practice followed by the monks and nuns in Tibet up to the present day.

The third great find is the recent one of manuscripts from Afghanistan and Pakistan. In all three cases, the finds were unexpected since they happened in areas nowadays dominated by Islamic cultures. They brought to light a very vivid Buddhist past of those areas, and a Buddhist past that was, although outside India proper, fully Indian with regard to its literary traditions. All the finds are sensational, and all provided us with the Indian originals of texts so far known only from translations into Chinese or Tibetan. At the same time, they brought us large numbers of texts that were previously unknown, and this yields at least a vague impression of the tremendous amount and richness of the Buddhist literature that once existed in India. Apparently, most of it has been lost, and all the finds, especially the recent ones, suggest that what we have now is, despite the sheer amount of new material, still the tip of the iceberg.

On the Importance of the Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection

Kazunobu Matsuda, Bukkyo University

During the early 1990s a huge cache of Buddhist manuscripts written in various kinds of Indic script were discovered in the ruins of a stone monastery in the Zargaran district located in the eastern part of the Bāmiyān valley. The manuscripts discovered spanned a range of centuries, and comprised Buddhist documents in Gāndhārī and Sanskrit transcribed on palm leaves, birch bark, and vellum. The entire cache amounted to more than ten thousand items if we count also the smallest fragments, while the documents of several lines or more that would contribute to Buddhist research amounted to about two thousand items.

Among the discovered manuscripts, the oldest stratum, judging from their palaeographic style, dates back to the third century A.D., and include the Mahāyāna texts *Bhadrakalpikasūtra* and *Bodhisattvapiṭakasūtra,* both in Gāndhārī written in Kharoṣṭhī script; the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (p. 18) in Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit written in Kuṣāṇa-Brāhmī script; the *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādanirdeśasūtra* (p. 22) and the *Mahāvastu* both in Sanskrit written in Gupta-Brāhmī script; and the *Larger Sukhāvatīvyūha* in Gilgit-Bāmiyān type I script, which is a sixth-seventh century variation of the Gupta-Brāhmī script. A great deal of them contain astounding finds with regard to contents and dates. Even for Buddhists in Japan the existence of a Sanskrit fragment of the *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādanirdeśasūtra* and that of a sixth century Sanskrit fragment of the *Larger Sukhāvatīvyūha*, of which only post-twelfth century Nepalese manuscripts were formerly known, are important literary discoveries that cannot fail to impress the research-oriented. Among these finds the *Bhadrakalpikasūtra* and the *Bodhisattvapiṭakasūtra* mark the first

Sorting the fragments

for Mahāyāna Buddhist manuscripts in Gāndhārī, providing concrete evidence to support the view that the early Mahāyāna Buddhist canon was written in Gāndhārī, a theory that Buddhist researchers have long asserted, but up until now were unable to prove.

Although a great number of Buddhist archaeological sites and Buddhist artworks have been discovered in the Gandhāra region, which broadly includes Bāmiyān, the discovery of written Buddhist documents have long eluded researchers. It is only in recent times that large caches of written materials from Bāmiyān have been uncovered, well deserving of our attention. What we can detect in these written materials is the living breath of the Buddhism of ancient times as it was transmitted at its peak of prosperity. At present, these various manuscripts are preserved by different collectors in Europe and America, as well as Japan, with the most representative one being the Schøyen Collection of Norway. An international joint research team, headed by my dear friend Professor Jens Braarvig, has been working on deciphering these documents since 1997, when we first visited Mr. Schøyen's villa in Spikkestad near Oslo. The results of our research findings have been published in three volumes, the fourth to be released in the near future.

Kazunobu Matsuda at work

Introduction

An Analysis of the Scripts

Lore Sander

The exhibition displays manuscripts remains written in different scripts on different materials by different hands in different times. Similar to the famous manuscripts from Xinjiang, the mainly Buddhist manuscripts in the Martin Schøyen Collection give an idea of the rich Buddhist literature housed in the monastic libraries around Bāmiyān. The manuscripts reflect scribal traditions in a region which was frequently conquered by invaders from different nations, who sometimes put their stamp on its culture, and in other cases accepted or even patronized it.

The oldest manuscripts in the exhibition date from the second to third century A.D. This was the time of the greatest extent of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, when the trade between China and the western world flourished. Even though most Kuṣāṇa rulers practised their own heroic cult, they supported the creed of the population under their rule, which was mainly Buddhist. It was during their rule that Buddhist monks successfully began to work in the oases round the Taklamakan, and in China. Since Martin Schøyen generously allowed working on his important collection, it has been established that the scribal tradition of the monasteries in Xinjiang goes directly back to their western neighbours. With the Arabian invasion in the 8th century the leading Buddhist culture around Bāmiyān came to an end. From then on the region was dominated by Islam, and the Arabian script.

The analysis of their script is especially important for fragmentary manuscripts. None of the manuscripts in the catalogue are complete. Colophons containing historical facts, such as dates, names of kings or famous donors, are missing. Even when colophons are preserved, the early manuscripts in general mention only the title of the text. In collective manuscripts *uddānas*, short verses summarizing the titles, give an idea of their content. Therefore the only means to date and localize the manuscript remains is comparison with dated inscriptions. In more recent times radio-carbon dating has helped to assign an approximate date, but it can not tell us from where the manuscripts originated. With a few exceptions the manuscripts in the Martin Schøyen Collection have not been radio-carbon dated.[1]

Most manuscripts and inscriptions published in this catalogue are written in different types of Indian Brāhmī, derivations of which have been in use on the Indian subcontinent since the time of Aśoka in the third century B.C. until today. Like the Greek and other European scripts it is written from left to right. But differently it is a syllabic script, as one sign represents one syllable including the vowel a. Diacritic signs representing short and long vowels are added to the basic signs. Varieties of Brāhmī are wide-spread. They are the basis for many Southeast Asian scripts including the Thai script. The name "Brāhmī" has a mythological background, as it is said that the script was given to the Indians by the god of wisdom "Brahmā".

Brāhmī was not the only script used in the area round Bāmiyān. One palm leaf manuscript containing the Dharmaguptaka version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (p. 6-9), and one inscription on a pot (p. 88-89), in which most likely debris of old manuscripts were formerly stored, is written in Kharoṣṭhī. As with Brāhmī, this script also dates back to the time of Aśoka, but it was locally bound to the area embracing modern Afghanistan and Pakistan. From there it spread to the east, where it became the main script of the oases on the southern trade route to China (Xinjiang), ranging from the kingdom of Kroraina (Miran) in the east to the kingdom of Khotan in the west. For unknown reasons it lost its importance around the fourth to fifth century A.D., when it was gradually replaced by the Brāhmī. Different from the Brāhmī, the origin of which is still disputed, Kharoṣṭhī is an offspring of an Aramaic alphabet. It is written from right to left, and was adopted to the Indian vernaculars by adding signs for only short vowels to those representing consonants. Most of the documents written in the Kharoṣṭhī script contain texts composed in a gradually sanskritized local middle-indic language, named "Gandhārī". The meaning of the word Kharoṣṭhī and its orthographic variants is not sure. There are many explanations ranging from "lip of an ass" to "empire placed".

Another local script known from the same region is the Bactrian script. One fragmentary folio in the exhibition (p. 72-73) is written on leather, the traditional Greek writing material. It belonged to a Buddhist manuscript cut in Indian book format (*poṭhi*). The use of leather even for Buddhist text is a good example for the mutual influence of the different cultures active in this region. The basis for the Bactrian script is a cursive variety of the Greek script. Since Alexander the Great conquered the region followed by Indo-Greek successors, Greek scripts were wide spread. Many coins, which were introduced by the Greeks, bear on one side a Greek and on the other a Kharoṣṭhī inscription. Roman coins point towards a vivid trade with the Roman Empire. Bactrian documents in the Martin Schøyen Collection are rare. Most Bactrian documents come from northern Afghanistan, the region round Kunduz, the old Bactria. They date from the third to the ninth century A.D.

Only the many debris of Brāhmī manuscripts in the collection show how the script developed to a local

1 See Braarvig (2006: 279-291). Fragments from three manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection have been radio-carbon dated, among them the Kharoṣṭhī *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* presented on pages 6-9, which was assigned the age range A.D. 53-234.

standard script between the second to third and the sixth to seventh centuries CE. The development is characterized by an increasing tendency towards ornate shapes. The fully developed standard script is named "Gilgit/Bāmiyān,Type I", because it is also frequently present among the manuscripts from Naupur, near Gilgit (Pakistan). Most manuscripts in the Martin Schøyen Collection are written in this script; the following examples are published in this catalogue: *Aśoka legend* (p. 58-61; the last folio written in a cursive script with a pen having a pointed tip.), *Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga* (p. 34-35), *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (p. 8-9), *Andhasūtra* etc. (p. 10-13), *Karmavācana* (p. 38-41), *Mīmāṃsaka* (p. 74-77), *Jyotīṣkāvadāna* (p. 62-65), *Buddhastotras of Mātṛceṭa* (p. 78-81), *Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā* (p. 82-85); *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā* (p. 26-29), *A Commentary on the Mahāsamājasūtra* (p. 50-51), *Avadānaśataka* (p. 66-69), and *A Fragment of a Play* (p. 90-91). In the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta period (second to fifth centuries A.D.) the scribes used palm leaf for writing down Buddhist texts, a material which had to be imported from India, because palm trees do not grow in this region. Around the sixth century it was gradually replaced by the local birch bark, which is cut in Indian *poṭhi* shape imitating a palm leaf. The development of the Brāhmī from the Kuṣāṇa time towards the local "Gilgit/Bāmiyān, Type I" is shown in the following table, which is basically the same already published from manuscripts originating from Qizil (oasis of Kučā) and Šorčuq (oasis of Qarašahr) on the northern Silk Route (Xinjiang), which show the same development of Brāhmī (Sander, 1968: 27).

	Kuṣāṇa 2nd-3rd c. CE		Gupta period 4th-5th c. CE			Gilgit/Bāmiyān I 6th-7th c. CE
A						
E						
kha						
ḍa						
ṇā						
thā						
bhū						
mā						
ya						
rū						
śa						
sa						

Excluding manuscripts written in "Gilgit/Bāmiyān, Type I", which were listed above, most of the remaining manuscripts in the catalogue can be assigned to one of the scripts represented in this table. Two manuscripts are written in the Brāhmī current in the Kuṣāṇa period, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-Prajñāparamitā* manuscript (p. 18-21) and *An Early Commentary* (p. 52-55). The following manuscripts range between the Kuṣāṇa- and Gupta period: *Caṅgīsūtra* (p. 2-5), *Śāriputra-Abhidharma* (p. 46-49), and the fragments from an early *Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga* manuscript (p. 32-33). Excluding some peculiarities the script comes closest to the examples in column three. The *Caṅgīsūtra* and the *Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga* manuscripts show a considerable slant to the right, which is also characteristic for many manuscripts written in "Gilgit/Bāmiyān, Type I". Two manuscripts show the same letters as in column four; they are the composite manuscript containing *Mahāyānasūtras* (p. 22-25), and the manuscript *On the Qualifications of a Vinayadhara* (p. 42-43). The script of the manuscript with remains of the *Śikhālakasūtra* (p. 14-15), written by a comparably untrained hand, is a bit closer to the examples in column 5, which approximately date from the fifth century. Because the script slowly develops towards the "Gilgit/Bāmiyān, Type I", the dating of the manuscripts between the fourth and fifth centuries remains vague. The writing material offers little help, because they are written on palm leaf. The change towards the local birch bark begins only when the ornate script

was standardized, which means not much before the sixth century.

Around the seventh century the local "Gilgit/Bāmiyān, Type I" was gradually replaced by another, widespread current Brāhmī. In slightly varying types it became a standard script, not only in north-eastern India, from where it originates, but also in Nepal. Among other names it is known as "Siddhamātṛkā". As "Siddham" script it still exists in China and Japan. One variety written with straight lines was introduced into the region under discussion, which was named "Protośāradā", because it is a predecessor of the "Śāradā" script of Kashmir, or "Gilgit/Bāmiyān, Type II" according to their main finding spots. All manuscripts from the region under discussion are written on the local birch bark. In the catalogue they are represented by the remains of *Mātṛceṭa's Varṇārhavarṇa* (p. 78-81), and *Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā* (p. 82-85).

Only the earliest manuscripts dating from the Kuṣāṇa period may have been presented by Indian monks or by Buddhist laymen to the monasteries around Bāmiyān, because the script is very close to that of the Mathurā inscriptions. All the other manuscripts were likely written where they were found. The long donation inscription on a copper scroll prepared for the foundation of a Stūpa under the reign of the Alchon Hun ruler Mehama (p. 92-96) is incised in the same local script, which is represented in column five. The historical background of this inscription confirms the date formerly only assigned to this type of script by its gradual development toward "Gilgit/Bāmiyān, Type I". The inscription is therefore not only important for its content and composition, but is also a fixed point for dating the undated Buddhist manuscripts in the Martin Schøyen Collection.

Kharoṣṭhī Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection

Richard Salomon, University of Washington

Besides a vast number of Buddhist texts written in Sanskrit, the Schøyen collection of manuscripts from the Bāmiyān area also includes over two hundred small fragments written in the Kharoṣṭhī script and the Gāndhārī language. Kharoṣṭhī and Gāndhārī were the normal literary media in the northwestern region of the Indian subcontinent, known in antiquity as Gandhāra, between the third century B.C. and the third century A.D. During the latter part of this period, Gāndhārī and Kharoṣṭhī were gradually supplanted by Sanskrit written in local varieties of the Brāhmī script. This transition is vividly illustrated by the Schøyen Bāmiyān collection, where most of the earliest manuscripts are in Kharoṣṭhī/Gāndhārī, while the later ones are in Sanskrit.

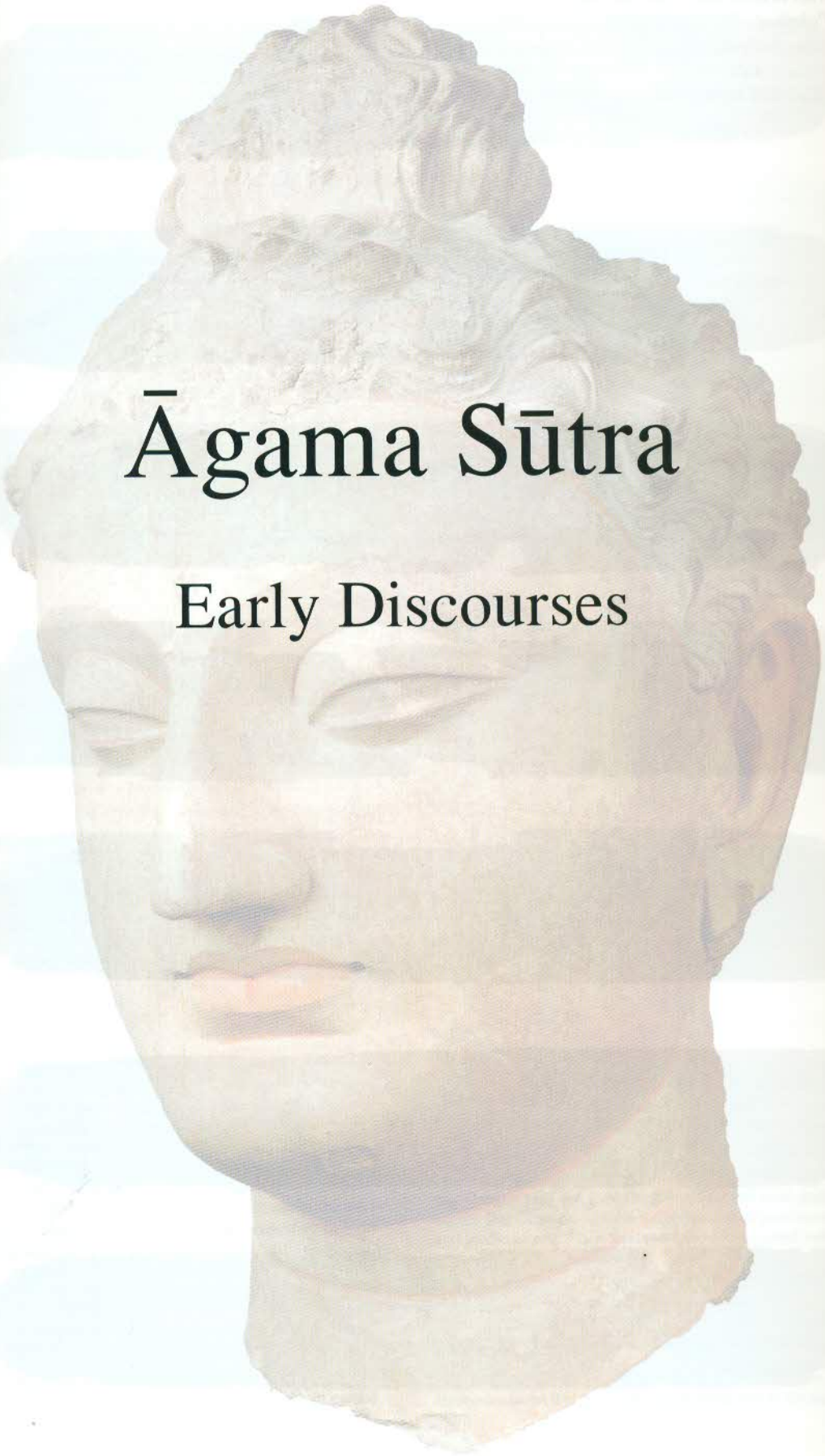
Kharoṣṭhī script, written from right to left, is apparently an adaptation for an Indian language of late forms of the Semitic-derived Aramaic script which had been used in the Indian territories of the Achaemenid empire of Iran. The Gāndhārī language is a member of the Middle Indo-Aryan family, so that it is a daughter to Sanskrit and a sister to Pāli and the various Prakrits. Until recently, Gāndhārī was known primarily from Buddhist dedicatory inscriptions, legends on the coins of Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian kings, and secular documents found in Chinese Central Asia. But within the past fifteen years large numbers of birch bark and palm leaf manuscripts of Buddhist texts in Gāndhārī have come to light, including those in the Schøyen collection. As a result, it has now become clear that Gāndhārī was in ancient times one of the major literary languages of Indian Buddhism, and during the period in question Gāndhārī was probably as important as the better-known Pāli and Sanskrit. The rediscovery of Gāndhārī Buddhist literature is particularly significant in that it appears to have been the source for many of the earliest Chinese translations of Buddhist texts.

All of the Kharoṣṭhī/Gāndhārī texts in the Schøyen collection are small fragments of palm leaf folios from an undetermined number of different manuscripts, datable to around the late second to early fourth centuries A.D. Although parallels in previously known Buddhist literatures have not yet been located for the majority of them, a few well-known texts have been identified. These include several fragments of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (p. 6), which describes the last days of the Buddha's life and is one of the fundamental texts common to all Buddhist literatures.

Of particular interest are three texts associated with Mahāyāna Buddhism, which are among the earliest documentary evidence of Mahāyāna literature. Among these are several dozen small fragments of a single manuscript of the *Bhadrakalpikasūtra*, which describes the one thousand Buddhas who have lived and will live during the current "fortunate aeon" of Buddhist cosmic history. The *Bhadrakalpikasūtra* was an extremely popular text in the northern schools of Buddhism and is extant in many translations in languages such as Tibetan, Chinese, and Khotanese, but the newly discovered Gāndhārī fragments are the first record of this text in an original Indian language. The same is the case with two other Mahāyāna sūtras, the *Sarvapuṇyasamuccayasamādhisūtra* and the *Bodhisattvapiṭakasūtra*. Both of these texts had previously been known only from later Chinese and Tibetan translations, but now one small fragment of a Gāndhārī text of each of them has been identified among the Schøyen Bāmiyān materials.

The presence of these Mahāyāna texts provides valuable new information for the much-contested early history of Mahāyāna Buddhism in its Indian homeland, for which until now hardly any early documentary evidence had survived. These manuscripts also show that such early Mahāyāna scriptures were not originally recorded in Sanskrit, as had generally been assumed, but rather in Gāndhārī, and presumably also in other local Indian vernaculars.

The discovery of such early Mahāyāna manuscripts in the "Greater Gandhāra" region might also be taken to lend support to those historians of Buddhism who hold that Mahāyāna Buddhism originated in the northwest, possibly under the influence of Iranian religious concepts. However, we must be cautious about jumping to conclusions at this preliminary stage of study. For Mahāyāna Buddhism must have also been present in other parts of India at this period, and it is probably only because of the more favorable climatic conditions in the northwest that manuscript evidence happens to survive only there. Nonetheless, the new evidence from the Schøyen Kharoṣṭhī fragments does clearly confirm that Mahāyāna texts and concepts were prominent at an early date in the Gandhāra region, and it is anticipated that future study of this material and identification of other texts will further clarify this central issue of Buddhist history.



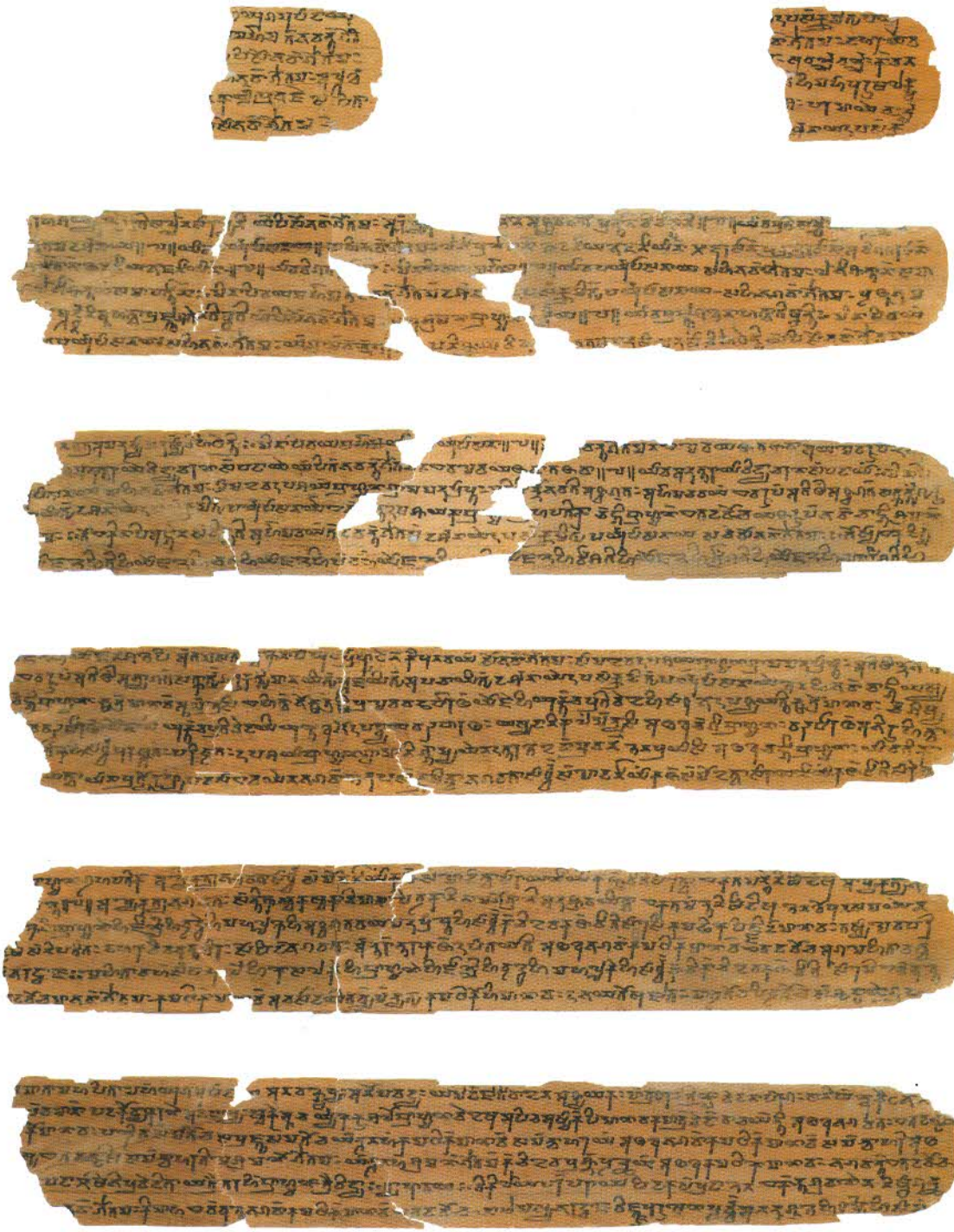
Āgama Sūtra

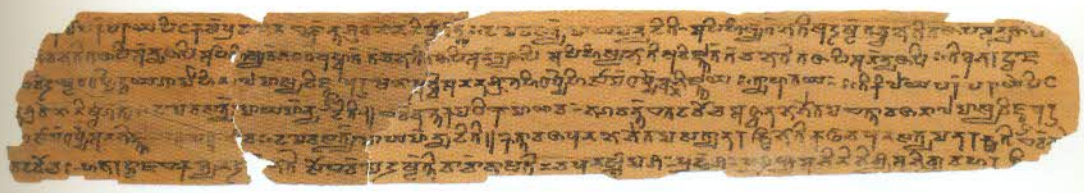
Early Discourses

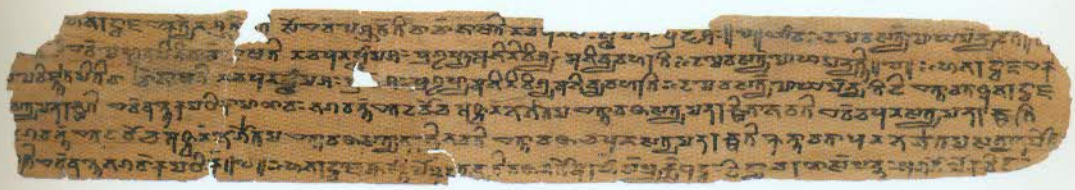
Āgama Sūtra

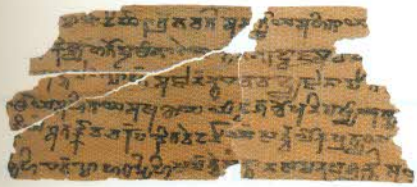
Caṅgīsūtra

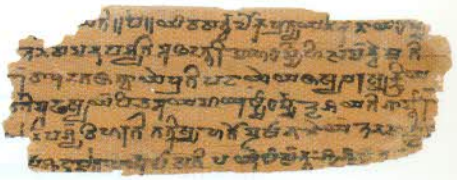
Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. I, pp. 53-62 and vol. II, pp. 1-16
Editors: Torkel Brekke/Jens-Uwe Hartmann
Material: Palmleaf
Script: Kuṣāṇa Brāhmī
Date: 4th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

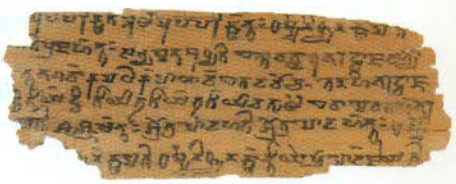












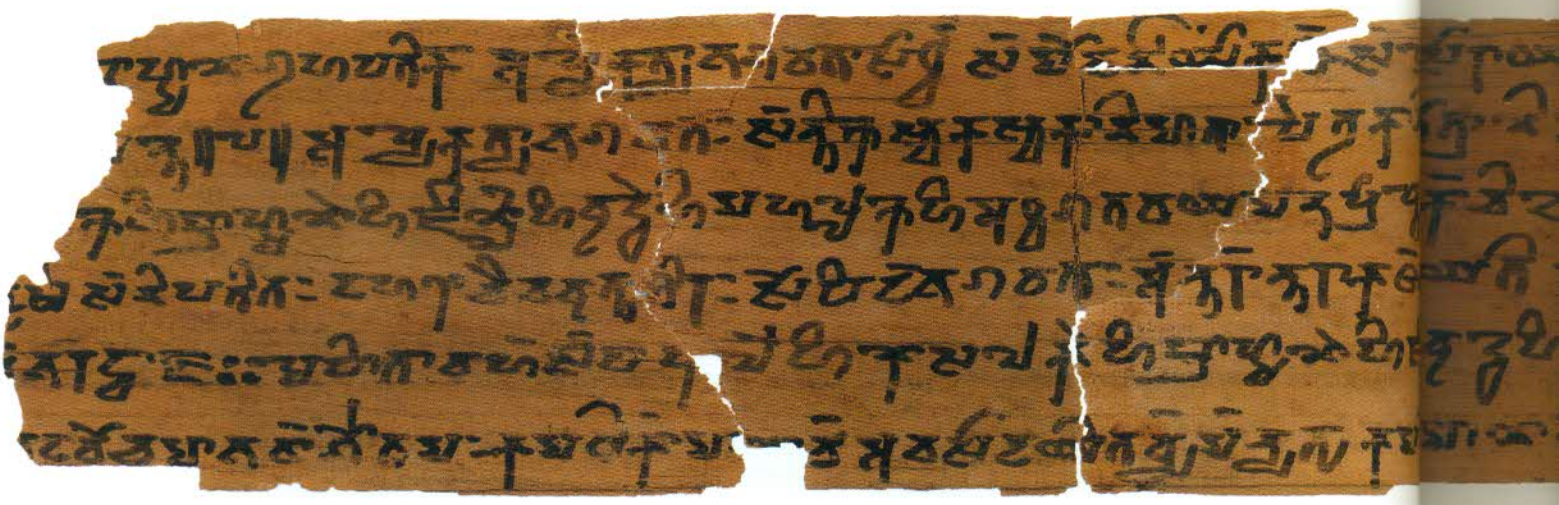
The sūtra relates the story of the brahmin Caṅgī who goes to see the Buddha, even though he is advised against it by his Brahmin friends. The main theme is the question of what constitutes religious authority in Buddhism as opposed to Vedic tradition. The 24 fragments of the manuscript preserve roughly 83% of the text. The text corresponds to the *Caṅkīsutta* of the Theravādin tradition.

Background

The story begins with the Buddha and his entourage travelling across the plains of the Kosala country. They come to a village called Upaśaya where there lives a wealthy and learned Brahmin named Caṅgī. He wishes to pay Gautama a visit, but is advised against it by his brahmin friends. They argue that Gautama should instead pay Caṅgī a visit due to his high standing and good qualities. Caṅgī argues that Gautama is knowledgeable and of good moral behaviour, and is also after all their guest and should be treated well (This is where our first fragment starts). He gets his way and sets out towards the Buddha's dwelling. Upon arrival he is greeted, seated, and a conversation starts.

Among the crowd there is a young Brahmin named Kamaṭhika. He is here the main interlocutor of the Buddha, and another version of the sūtra does indeed bear the more fitting title *Kāmaṭhikasūtra*. Kāmaṭhika interrupts the conversation, and the other Brahmins insist that he is allowed to speak due to his high status.

Āgama Sūtra



Transliteration, folio 3, verso

1 /// + + [brā]hmaṇagṛhapatikā ◊ a[py] ekatyā bhagavatā sārdhdhaṃ saṃm[o] .. [n]. aṃmoditvā

2 /// + + .. nte ‖ pe ‖ apy ekatyā bhagavataḥ saṃntike svakasvakāni mātāpaitṛkāni nā śrāvayitvā

3 /// + + kehi brāhmaṇehi jīrṇṇehi vṛddhehi mahallakehi adhvagatavayam anuprāpteh kāṃcid eva

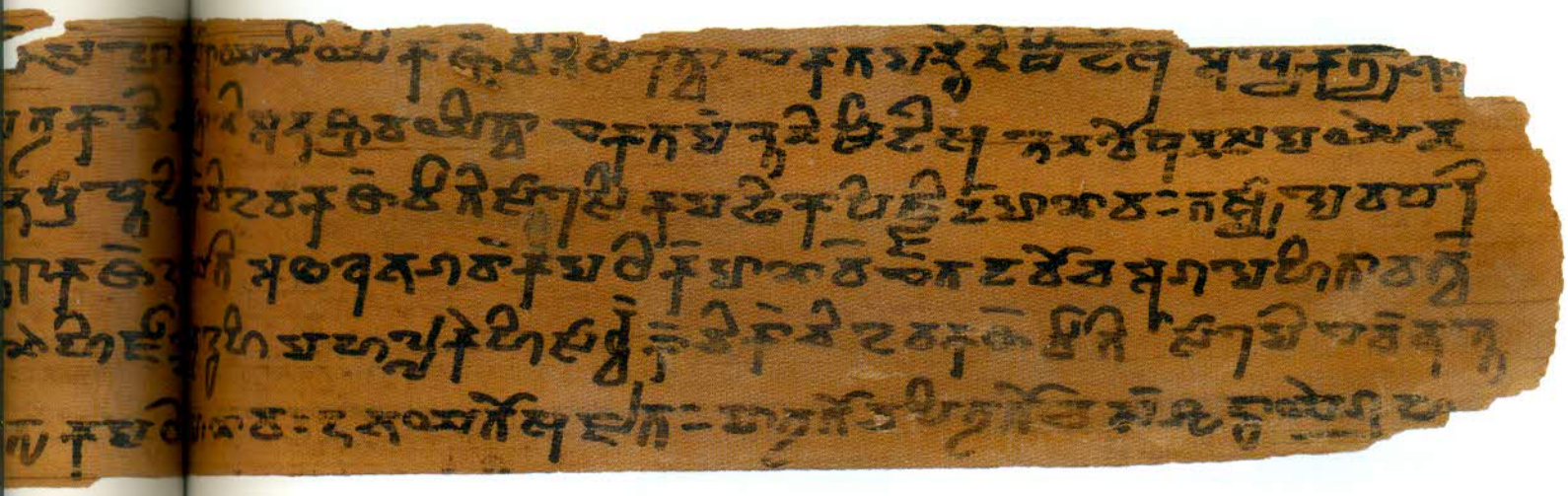
4 /// .[ū]ṣ[i] saṃnipatitaḥ daharo caiva vutta[ś]iraḥ so pidaṃ bhagavataḥ aṃntarāṃn pātayati ath

5 /// .. bharadvāja imehi tāva haṃ sāṃba[h]ulehi kosalakehi brāhmaṇehi jīrṇṇehi vṛd kehi sārdh

6 /// + .. d avoca mā bhavāṃ gautamaḥ kamaṭhikāṃ m[āṇa]vaṃ avasādayitavyaṃ ma ṭhiko hi mā

Kāmaṭhika wishes to know whether the Buddha would consider the Vedas as authentic knowledge because they are "transmitted by oral tradition, by hearsay, by an unbroken line of teachers, by the handing down of the Piṭakas", and what he has to say about the claim that they are "the sole truth", and that "everything else is vain". The Buddha answers that it is no good to insist on something being the truth, and that a tradition handed down by hearsay does not meet his requirements for authenticity. One should not take the position of someone who is the holder of truth without having experience of it personally. In general one should be modest regarding claims to truth. He illustrates this with a story of a monk who is approached by a householder and asked about the conditions of greed, hate and delusion, the point of the story being that the best way to teach the truth is to illustrate it through one's own behaviour, and let people experience and decide for themselves what truth entails. Kāmaṭhika's interest is aroused, and he decides to stay and learn about the Dharma. The Buddha goes on to teach about the ways to obtain truth, but the rest of the sūtra is missing from our fragments.

If we include the present manuscript three versions of this sūtra are available, and exceptionally all of them are in Indian languages (no translations into Chinese, Tibetan or other Central Asian languages). In Pāli the *Caṅkīsutta* of the Majjhimanikāya is preserved



hm[o] .. [n]. + [k]mmoditvā sārāyaṇīyāṃ kathāṃ v[ī]tis[ā]retvā ekatamante niṣ[ī]deṃsu apy ekatyā bh.[g].
paitṛkāni nāmag[illegible]vayitvā ekatamaṃnte niṣīdiṃsu tena kho puna samayena
n anuprāptehi sā[illegible]ṃcid eva kathāṃ vītisāresi kamaḍhiko pi jjidaṃ māṇavaḥ tasyām eva pari
aṃntarāṃntarā [illegible]ayati atha khu bhagavāṃ kamaṭhikaṃ māṇavaṃ etad avoca āgamehi tāva tvaṃ
jīrṇṇehi vṛddhe[illegible]hi sārdhdhaṃ kāṃci kāṃcid eva kathāṃ vītisāremi evaṃ vutte
yitavyaṃ maṃn[illegible]iko hi māṇavaḥ ubhayato sujātaḥ mātṛto ca pitṛto ca saṃśuddhāye graha

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in its entirety (MN II 164-177). The Sanskrit version of the [Mūla-] Sarvāstivādins is available in part based on fragments from Central Asia and a Dīrghāgama manuscript from Pakistan or Afghanistan (Hartmann, 2000 and 2002).

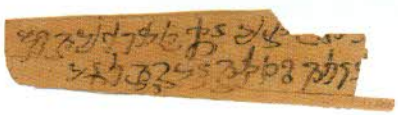
The Manuscript

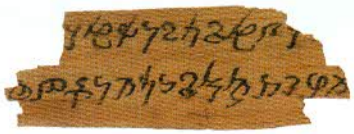
The manuscript remains consist of 24 fragments. From these it has been possible to reconstruct the major part of six folios. The material is palm leaf, and the leaves were probably held together by a string that passed through a hole in the now missing left portion of the folios. The exact size of the folios is uncertain, but estimates show that approximately 83 % of the text has been preserved. The language used is Sanskrit exhibiting certain Prakrit features, or so called Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit. Manuscripts from this era illustrate a general tendency away from texts written in various colloquial Prakrits to a more formalized Sanskrit. The palaeographical analysis reveals that the manuscript is written in an early western Gupta style with strong Kuṣāṇa affiliations, and a probable date is set to the fourth century A.D. Based on the language used in the text it has been suggested that it may belong to the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school, but in the absence of comparable literary remains of other schools once present in the same area a definite conclusion would be premature.

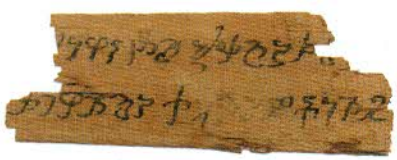
Āgama Sūtra

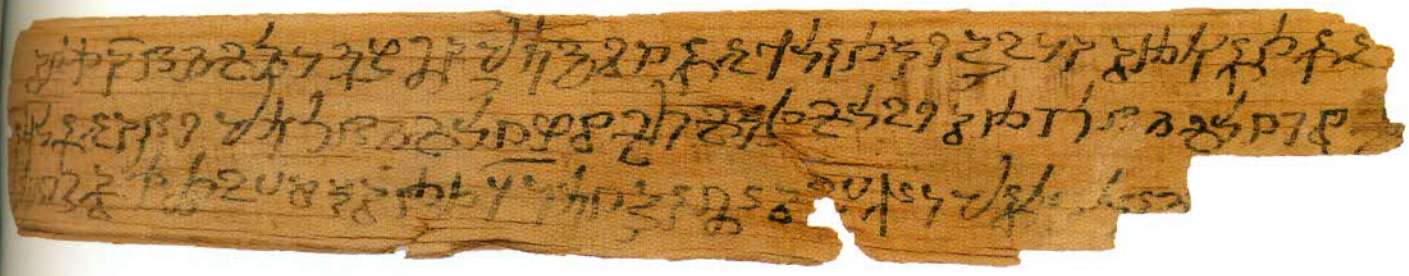
Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. I, pp. 243-273
Editors: Mark Allon and Richard Salomon
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Kharoṣṭī
Date: 2nd-3rd century A.D.
Language: Partially sanskritized Gāndhārī









Transliteration, folio 3, recto (read in opposite direction)
1 /// droniye nikṣipisu satahasya acayena teladronito udhvaritvaṃ sarvagaṃdhotakehi kayaṃ śapayisu
2 /// [stra]yuvaśatehi kayaṃ veḍhayisu ahatehi paṃcahi vastrayugaśatehi kayaṃ veḍhitva ayaṃsadroni telena
3 /// + .v. + + + [dh. n.] ci[da] cinitva raño mahasudarśanasya śarira jāpayisu catumaharpathe sthuvaṃ akarisu

The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* is an account of the final months and passing away of the Buddha. Among these twelve fragments six are written in the Kharoṣṭī script, all part of the same manuscript, and the other six are written in a North-Western version of the Brāhmi script, remnants of four original manuscripts.

Background

The Pāli version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* is found in the Dīghanikāya, and is the longest sutta of this collection. It is one of the most central texts of early Buddhism, and different versions of it are also found in Tibetan, Chinese and other languages.

The story-line follows the last months of the Buddha's life, but the text also gives a good idea of his general teachings. After almost half a century of ministry all that was needed to attain *nirvāṇa* had been taught, and it was therefore the Buddha's primary concern at the end of his life to impress on his followers the importance of putting the teachings to good use. This culminates in his passing, which was then, as now, perhaps the greatest event in the history of Buddhism. In his passing the Buddha gave the strongest possible testimony to the central tenets of Buddhism: the transitory nature of existence, and the futility related with striving for anything permanent.

The Kharoṣṭī Manuscript

The manuscript consists of six fragments, and these have been found to represent parts of five original folios. The script is Kharoṣṭī, a script written from right to left, employed in the northwestern part of ancient India. It is reminiscent of inscriptions from the time of the Kuṣāṇa king Kaniṣka and his successors, and a probable date of the second-third century A.D. has therefore been postulated.[1] A seventh fragment from the same manuscript has been found in another collection (BMSC vol I, p. 255-258).

The fragments contain different episodes in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*: 1) contains part of the episode in which the Buddha tells the monks to spend the rainy season around Vaiśālī while he remains in Veṇugrāmaka (Pāli: Beluvagāmaka) (recto), and the beginning of the episode at the Cāpāla-caitya (verso); 2) contains portions of the narrative concerning the dialogue between Māra and the Buddha, in which the former requests the latter to pass into *parinirvāṇa* immediately; 3) contains part of the episode in which the death and funeral ceremonies of King Mahāsudarśana is described, which is a different sutta in the Pāli canon; 4) contains perhaps the incident in which the monk Upavāṇa blocked the deities from watching the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*.[2]

This version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇaūtra* does not have any definitively established concordance with any of the other known editions in Indic or other languages. Still, some noteworthy parallels to the Chinese Dīrghāgama version have been noted by the editors, and this has led them to postulate a Dharmaguptaka affiliation. One curiosity of the present manuscript is that the encounter between the Buddha and Māra seems to be located at Rājagṛha, and not Uruvelā as in the other versions.

The Brāhmi Manuscripts[3]

The six preserved fragments belong to four different manuscripts, three made from palm leaf (nos. 1-3), and one from birch bark (nos. 4-5). The first two are written in an early Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I dated to the fifth-sixth century A.D., while the two last ones are written in a somewhat later standardized Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, dated to the sixth century A.D.

The contents: 1) contains the episode in which the minister Varṣākāra visits the Buddha, who then speaks about seven conditions for the protection of the Vṛji state; 2) contains parts of the verse spoken by the Buddha elucidating his decision to enter *nirvāṇa*; 3) contains the episode of Putkasa's conversion; 4-5) contains parts of the Mahāsudarśanasūtra (which in all other versions except for the Pāli is included in the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*) where among other things the seven jewels are described.

Regarding school affiliation the editor has concluded that nos. 1 and 2 come close to the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda version, while nos. 3-5 are closer to the Chinese Dīrghāgama belonging to the Dharmaguptaka school.

1 Radiocarbon dating has also been carried out for this manuscript, yielding the date A.D. 53-234; see BMSC vol. III, 279-291.

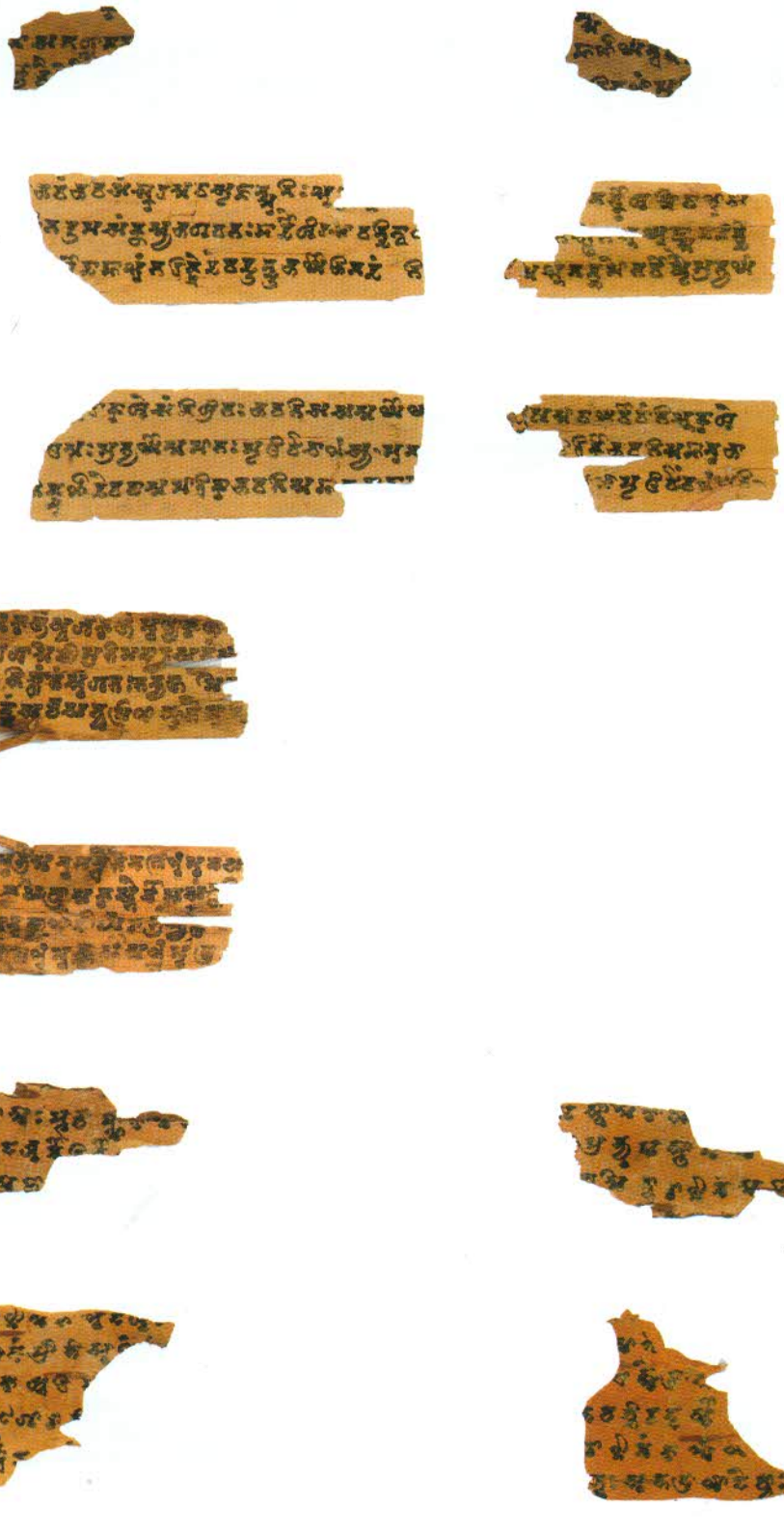
2 See page 9 for a translation of the fragments.

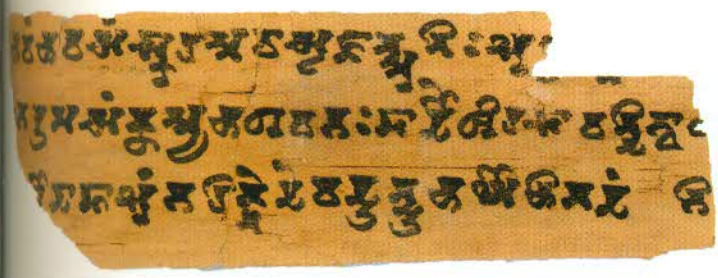
3 Depicted on the following page.

Āgama Sūtra

Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 17-24
Editor: Klaus Wille
Material: Palm leaf and birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 5th-7th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit





Transliteration, folio 2, recto

1 /// .. bhavaṃ bhavasaṃskāram avāsṛjan muniḥ a .[y]. .[m]. + + + + + + + + nat kośam ivāṇḍa[sa].
2 /// ..[ṃ]ta upasaṃkkramya bhagavataḥ pādau śirasā vanditvā [e] + + + + + + [t]. [s]th[ita] āyuṣmān [ā]nand[o]
3 /// + + [ś]odāhā aṃtarikṣe devadundubhayo bhinadaṃti + + .. [me] ānanda hetavo ṣṭau pratyayā

Translation of the Kharoṣṭī Fragments[1]

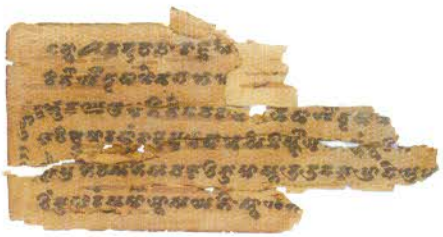
"... who, O Ānanda, will remain ... they ... three (months) ..." [...] "... (-caitya); beautiful (is the) caitya of the Pair of Sāla-trees ..." [...] "... I (was) dwelling in Rājagṛha, on the Vulture [Peak Mountain, shortly after becoming enlightened.] And then, O Monks, evil Māra [approached] the Tathāgata ..." [...] "... [Māra said:] "The Blessed One has [nothing] left to be done, ... acting in response (?), the Blessed One, venerable Sir, (?) ..." [...] "... learned, bearers of the dharma, attained to the complete righteousness of the dharma ... having obtained the true meaning, capable ... the teaching themselves ..." [...] "I shall not attain parinirvāṇa, O Evil One, until ... (female disciples), female lay followers [become] controlled, wise, disciplined ..." [...] "... they put it in a vat ... After an interval of a week, they took (it) out of the vat of oil and bathed the body with all fragrant liquids ... They wrapped the body with (five*) hundred pairs of (unbeaten*) cloth. Having wrapped the body with five hundred pairs of unbeaten cloth, (they filled*?) an iron vat with oil ... after building a pyre of (all*) fragrant [woods], they burned the body of King Mahāsudarśana. They built a stūpa at the crossing of four main roads." [...] "... Then [shortly] after he died, King Mahāsudarśana was born among the Brahma group of gods. Immediately ... [horse-]jewel died. The dharma-palace disappeared. The dharma-lotus pond disappeared. All the golden ... disappeared. In the capital city of Kuśāvatī, O Ānanda, the walls made of seven jewels disappeared. One (died?) ..." [...] ... Then the Blessed One, alone, retiring, secluded ... [...] as far as Kuśinagara and as far as Kuśi ... [...] ... covered (?) ... together with ... (and) gandharvas (and) asuras ... [...] ... having approached, ... (the Mallas of) Kuśinagara ... [...] "... do what must be done." "Good, Blessed One" ... [...] ... (five?) hundred Mallas seated in the council hall ... [...] ... got up from (his) seat; to Venerable Ānanda ...

1 BMSC vol. I, 245-248; depicted on pages 6-7.

Āgama Sūtra

Andhasūtra, Sūtra on the Three Moral Defects of Devadatta, and Kauvikumārāvadāna

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 25-36
Editor: Siglinde Dietz
Material: Birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 6th century A.D. (?)
Language: Sanskrit



These manuscripts contain three different texts, the *Andhasūtra*, wherein the Buddha describes three types of people, a text that concerns the moral defects of Devadatta, and a part of the *Kauvikumārāvadāna*, a story of one of the Buddha's previous lives.

Background

The two folios presented here contain what appears to be three different texts. The first preserves the end of the *Andhasūtra* and the beginning of a text that concerns the moral defects of Devadatta, the Buddha's corrupted cousin, but that has no obvious parallel in other collections. The other contains the *Kavikumārāvadāna*.

In the *Andhasūtra* the Buddha describes three types of people: the eyeless, the one-eyed, and the two-eyed. The eyeless are those who have no concern for their own well-being, and who do not act in such a way that they will have well-being in the future. The one-eyed are those who do have concern for their own well-being, but who have no concern for others. The two-eyed are those who have both concern from their own well-being and that of others. In the fragments the Buddha continues with some verses of advice concerning how the wise should deal with these three types. The text roughly corresponds to the *Andhasutta* of the Pāli Aṅguttaranikāya (AN I 128f).

The sūtra that deals with the three moral defects of Devadatta is more difficult to definitively locate. It shares some similarities to an episode in the Pāli *Itivuttaka* (It-a 85.5-87.7), as well as the Sanskrit *Saṅghabhedavastu* (GM III.4.230.4-231.14).

In the *Kauvikumārāvadāna*[1] the story begins with the occasion when the Buddha's foot is injured by a stone that Devadatta had dropped on him. The Buddha then relates the story of his previous birth as Kauvikumāra: As the son of king Satyarata he is ordered to be executed after an an astrologer has foreseen that he is destined to kill the king. A minister instead smuggles him out and gives him to a fisherman. The fragment contains the episode where the boy has grown up, is seen by one of the king's ministers, and a hunt begins, whereupon the boy takes refuge with the Nāga king Campaka. A parallel can be found in the 66th chapter of Kṣemendra's *Avadānakalpalatā*.[2]

1 This is an avadāna (see section 5), not an āgama sūtra, but have been placed in this section for practical reasons.

The Manuscripts

The seven fragments described here can be reconstructed as two incomplete folios of two different manuscripts. For both the material is birch bark and the script is Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I. Other manuscripts with a similar script have been dated to the 6th century A.D. For both manuscripts the folio numbers have been preserved in the left hand margins of the recto side: [6]8 for the first and [7]3 for the second. Some fragments are difficult to fit properly with the others as the bark has become slightly twisted.

2 A précis of this avadāna is given in Tucci (1949).

*Translation of an early Chinese version[1] of the *Andhasūtra*

It has been heard as follows. At one time the Buddha was in Śrāvastī, practising in the Jeta Grove in the Garden of the Benefactor of the Bereft. The Buddha addressed the *bhikṣus*: "There are three classes of people. What are the three? The first class is those whose eyes do not see, the second class the one-eyed, the third class the two-eyed.

What is being eyeless? In the world, *bhikṣus*, some people lack this vision (eye) [which is a] cause [for them to think]: 'I should act so as to earn what I have not yet earned.' Not having this thought, they also misuse what they have already acquired. They also lack this vision 'I should practise giving, I should peform acts of merit. May I, in consequence of this cause, be happy in a future life, and in consequence of this go to heaven.' They lack [this] idea. This is called being eyeless.

What is called being a one-eyed person? In the world, *bhikṣus*, the one-eyed have this kind of vision: 'May I acquire the wealth I have not yet acquired, and act so as not to fritter away the wealth I have already acquired.' They have only this vision, but lack this vision 'I should practise giving, I shall, in consequence of this cause, go to heaven.' They lack this sort of vision. This is called being one-eyed.

What is called being two-eyed? In the world, *bhikṣus,* some people have this vision 'May I acquire the wealth I have not yet acquired, and act so as not to fritter away what I have already acquired.' They have this sort of vision, and they also have this vision 'May I practise generosity. May I, in consequence of this cause, go to heaven' They also have this vision. This is called being two-eyed.'"

Afterwards he spoke *gāthās*:

> "To not have wealth and not to practise giving either, this is to fall into a double misfortune. The eyes are there but one sees nothing [with them], in consequence of this one falls into hell. Not having eyes, one arrives there and remains.
>
> One who does not guard oneself is called one-eyed. [One engages in] theft, corrupt behaviour, being double-tongued, false speech, but one has wealth and only amuses oneself in the world.
>
> Carrying out the dharma and what is not the dharma, one is a dissembler, achieving very great wealth. One does not [really?] enjoy it oneself and one does not give. After falling into hell, the one-eyed remains [there?].
>
> Having two eyes is the supreme and foremost dharma. Succeeding in making a living with all that one has, one feeds oneself and gives. In consequence of this one does (acts of) merit at will (?).
>
> Like the unwise (?) one feeds oneself [but also] gives, when the time comes one goes to heaven, and one is never separated from the dharma.
>
> As for those without eyes and the one-eyed, one should just avoid them and not go near them. The wise person should only take account of the two-eyed. The two-eyed are the foremost in this world and the next."

Thus spoke the Buddha.

1 T 150a, 876a16-b1 & 881b22-c3.

Transliteration, folio 1, recto

1 andho acakṣu iha bhikṣava ekatyasya pudga[l]. + + +

+ + + +

Āgama Sūtra

Śikhālakasūtra

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 1-6
Editors: Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Klaus Wille
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 5th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

The *Śikhālasūtra* contains a concise presentation of basic ethical guidelines for the lay Buddhist, and it is for this reason that it has been a particularly popular text throughout many Buddhist traditions. These two fragments preserve part of a folio presenting six prohibitions, the breaking of which leads to the squandering of wealth and reputation.

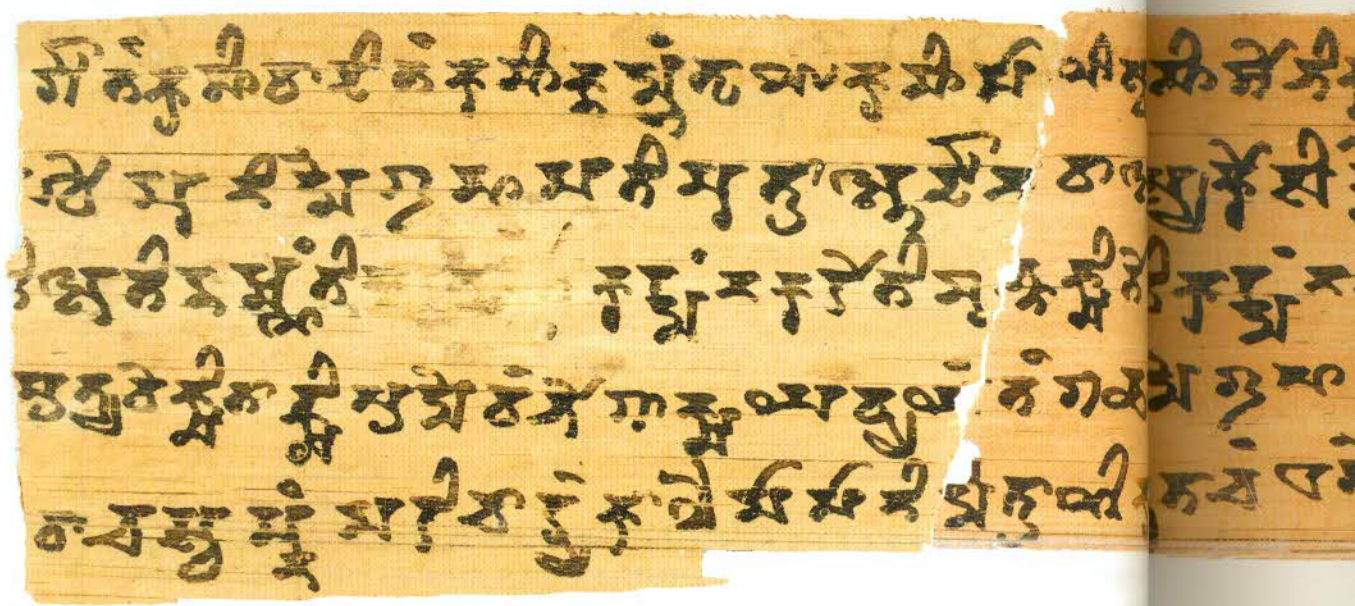
Background

In the *Śikhālakasūtra* (or *Siṅgālovādasutta* as it is known in Pāli) we meet the Buddha who is out on his alms round and happens upon the lay person Śikhāla, worshiping the six directions in the manner in which he has been instructed by his father. The Buddha tells him that this is not the way to honour the six directions, and goes on to describe in detail how a lay person should relate with his surroundings in the best possible manner. The sūtra's popularity is illustrated by the large number of versions available both in Indic languages (Sanskrit, Pāli and Prakrit) as well as in Tibetan and Chinese translations (five Chinese versions are available). The Pāli version, the only Indic version to be preserved in its entirety, may be found in the Dīghanikāya (DN III 180-193).

The Manuscript

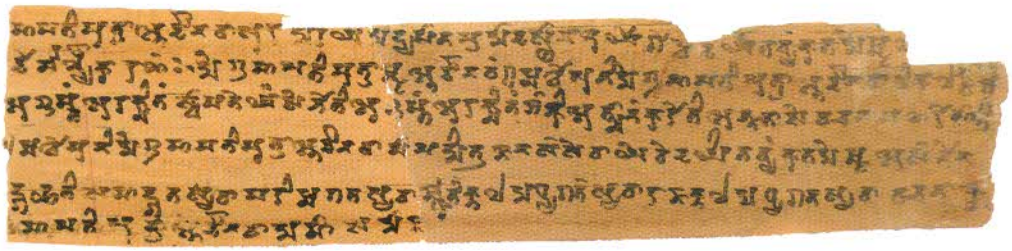
The two fragments may be combined, and preserve the right part of one folio. The manuscript is written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, and a probable date in the fifth century A.D. is suggested. The language is Sanskrit with a large amount of Prakrit features (Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit). As this specific mix is typical of many of the manuscripts of the collection it is tempting to consider it as the standard "church languge" of the school which produced them, perhaps the Mahāsāṅghika-Lokottaravādins as has been suggested for the *Caṅgīsūtra*.

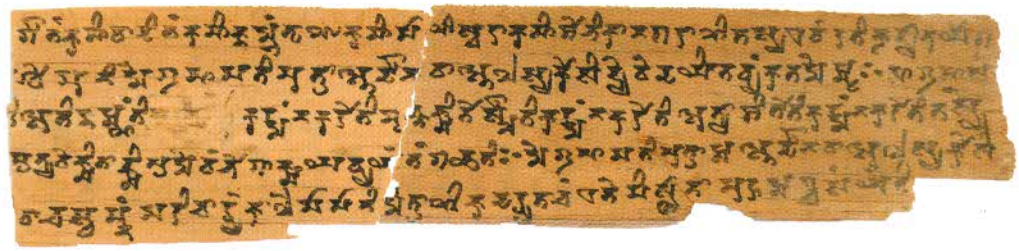
The fragments preserve a section in the *Śikhālakastra* in which the Buddha describes the six places, or rather ways, in which one decreases one's substance (i.e. squanders one's wealth). Curiously all of the available versions enumerate the six differently, and in our present fragment the list is as follows: 1. *surā* (intoxication), 2. *vikāla* (roaming around at inappropriate times), 3. *pāpamitra* (bad companionship), 4. *dyūta* (compulsive gambling), 5. *mahāsamāja* (habitual partying), and 6. *ālasya* (laziness).

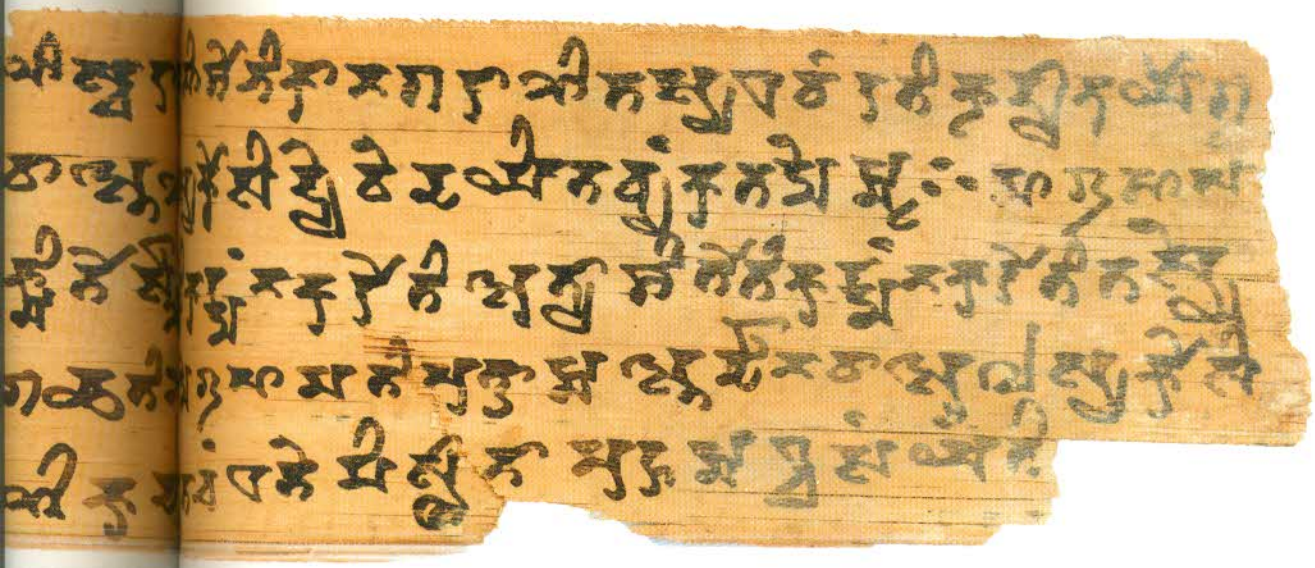


Transliteration, verso

1 /// + gītaṃ kahi vādi[t]aṃ kahi kumbhaṃtuṇā karā kahi śobhikāna
2 /// .. kho pun ime gṛhapatiputrā ādīnavā ālasyaka yitavya katame ṣ
3 /// [t]i atiuṣṇaṃ ti {{.. .. ..}} karmaṃ na karoti smīti karmaṃ na
4 /// + pratyavekṣitā kṣipram evaṃ bhogā kṣayavy gachati ime gṛha
5 /// .[i]vā ca svapnaṃ paricāryaṃ kāle pāpāni mi yatā caṃ ete pi st

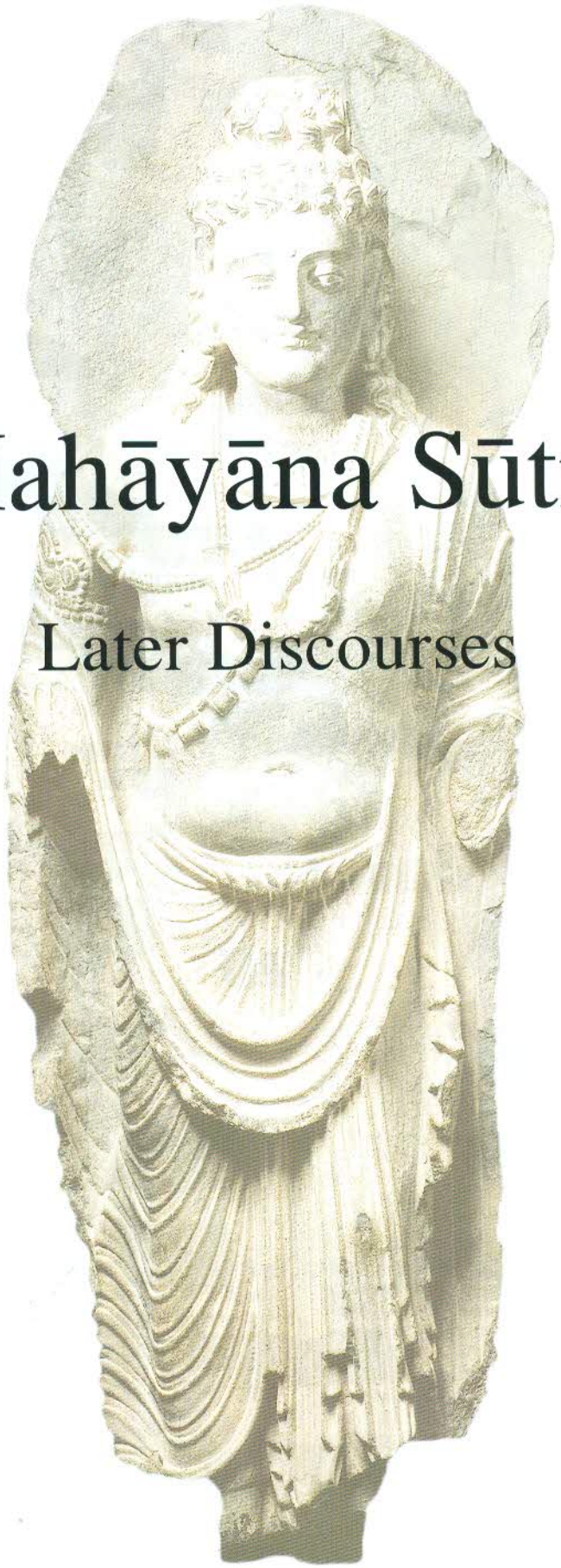






ṃtuṇā kahi pāṇi kahi śobhikānagarāṇi tasya evaṃ ratikr̥[ḍ]yānuyoga
ālasyakosidye vyavya katame ṣaṭ* iha gr̥hapa
karoti bubhūkṣiti karmaṃ na karoti atyāśito ti karmaṃ na karoti tasye
kṣayavya[ya]ṃtuchati ime gr̥hapatiputrā ṣa ādīnavā alasyakosi
pāni mitrāṇi kaṭhi caṃ ete pi sthānā puruṣa dhvasaṃyaṃti + + +

2



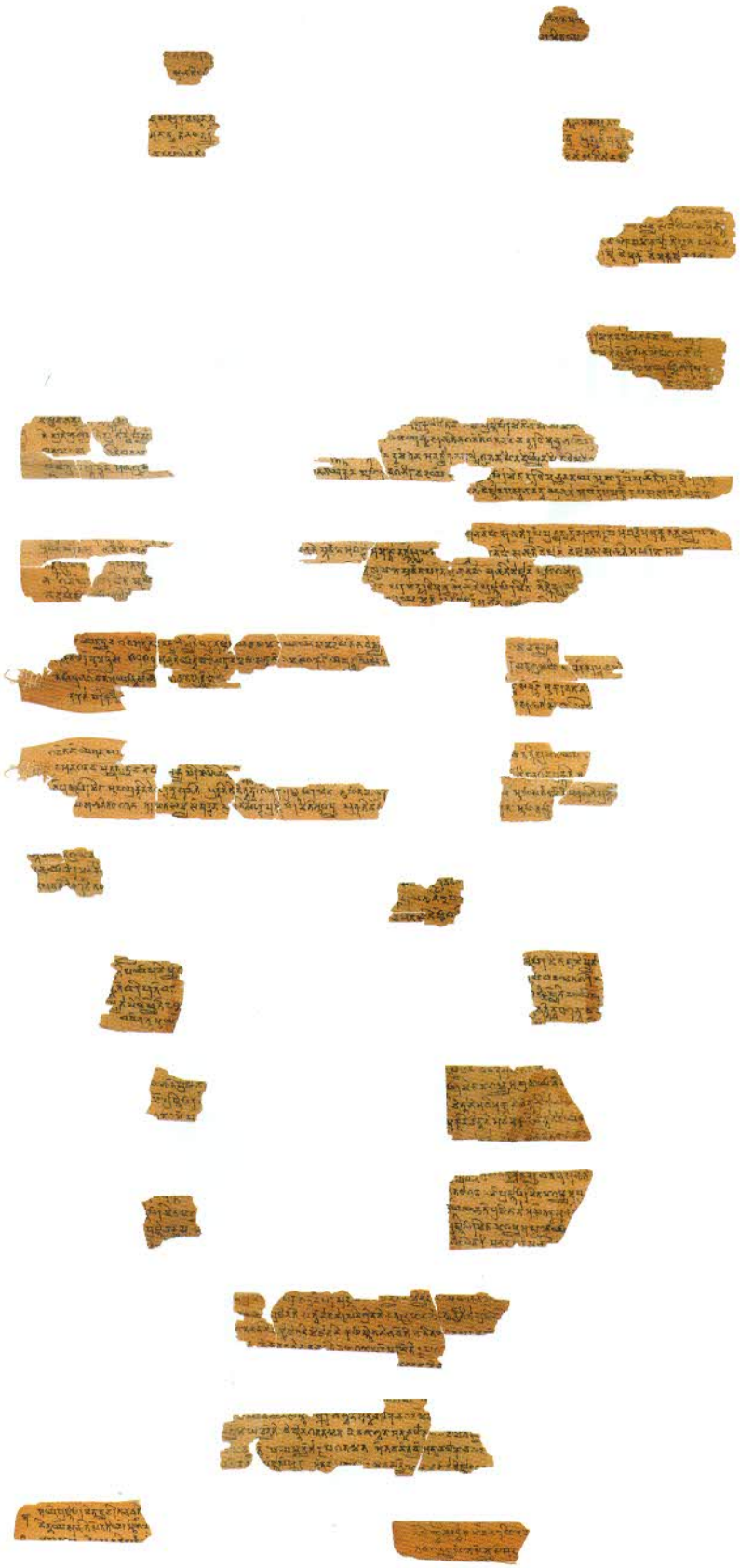
Mahāyāna Sūtra

Later Discourses

Mahāyāna Sūtra

Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. I, 1-51 and vol. II, 37-44
Editor: Lore Sander
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Kuṣāṇa Brāhmi
Date: Second half of 3rd century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

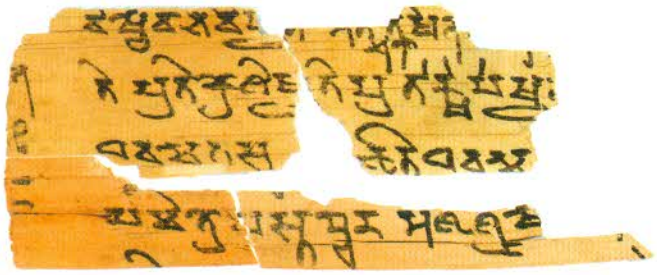


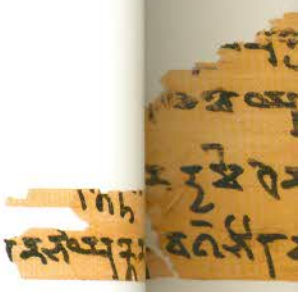
There are 66 fragments of the collection that preserve parts of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, one of the earliest texts of the Mahāyāna movement. This manuscript is a further indication the early date of this sūtra of the Prajñāpāramitā class.

Background

The *Aṣṭāsahasrikāprajñāpāramitā* is among the earliest Mahāyāna sūtras, and the earliest of the Prajñāpāramitā class. It was probably developed from around 100 B.C., and there are good reasons, mostly based on textual evidence, for supposing that this began among the Mahāsāṃghikas of Āndhrapradeśa (southeast India). On the other hand it has also been suggested, based on epigraphic evidence, that Mahāyāna Buddhism may have developed in the northwest, in the area where the present collection was found. The question remains unresolved. What is certain is that the *Aṣṭāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā* became fundamental for much of the later developments within the Mahāyāna movement.

The Prajñāpāramitā literature is concerned with the development of *prajñā*, which can perhaps be translated by the term "discriminative knowledge" (or, more popularly, "wisdom"). The goal of *prajñā* is to seek an accurate understanding of the phenomenal world, for instance of the fact of the absence of self. The sūtras do





Transliteration, folio 4, recto (end of chapter 7 and beginning of chapter 8)

1 v[i]ṣṭ[o] vā bhav. [ṣ]y. [t]. ◊ [a]tmutk. [r]ṣak. .. [r]. + + /// + + + + + + + + [k]. [l]adhītā vā i

2 ti prakrośiṣyati pratikṣipiṣya[t]. + + /// + + + + + + + + [a]tha kho yuṣmā subhūti taṃ etad av

3 evam eta s[u] ¡ bhūti evam e + + /// + + + [r]. [t]t. .u[ś]. .ū[l]. na durmedhena anara]lpaśrutena

4 pamitropastabdena ◊ aśruśrū[ṣ]e + .. /// [a]nabhiyuktena ◊ āhā [k].va gambhīrā bh]. + + .r. [

5 + .i + + + + + + + + + + + .. /// + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + [h]. tu vijñāna asi subhūti ab

not indulge in elaborate philosophical arguments. They are arranged in the traditional manner where the Buddha has discussions with his disciples, and where assertions are made that indicate the true way of things.

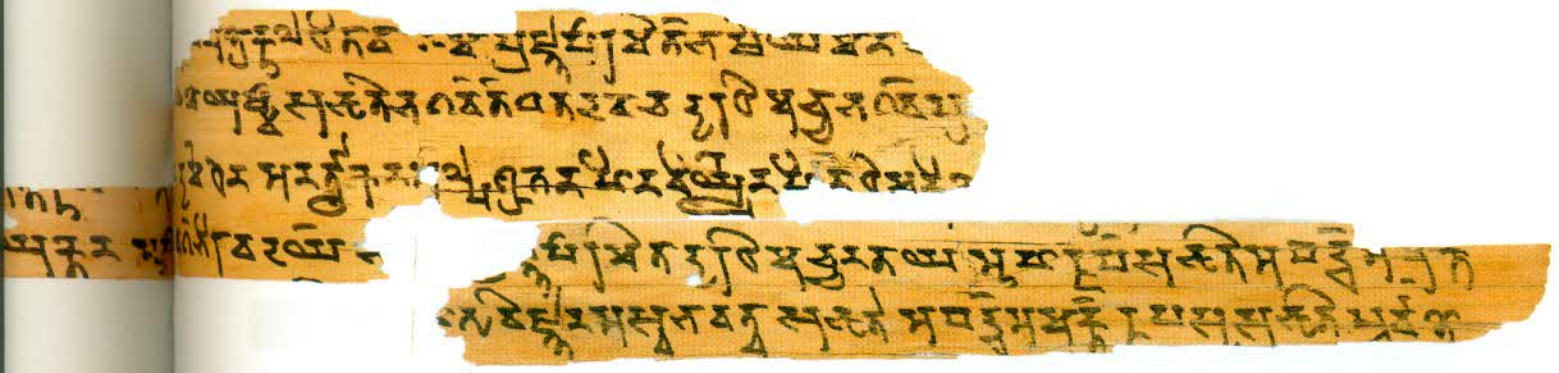
The Sanskrit text of the *Aṣṭāsahasrikāprajñāpāramitā* has been published three times, in Mitra (1888), Wogihara (1932), and Vaidya (1960), and an English translation may be found in Conze (1970). Early translations are available in Chinese, Tibetan, and other languages.

The Manuscript

The present manuscript(s) consists of sixty-six fragments, all of which can not be presented here (see BMSC vols. I and II for a full description). Mostly larger fragments and those that are part of a reconstructed folio are here presented. The material is palm leaf, and the script is a square and upright Brāhmi typical of the Kuṣāṇa period. A date in the second half of the third century A.D. is suggested. The language is a mix of Sanskrit and Prakrit forms, also called Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, a mix found in many of the manuscripts of the collection. Four folio numbers are preserved (or reconstructed), indicating the large number of leaves originally constituting the manuscript: 4) folio 152, 13) folio 243 , 14) folio 245, and 15) folio 247.

The manuscript is the oldest trace of the *Aṣṭāsāhasrikā* in an Indic language so far established (although news of an apparently older manuscript from Pakistan has recently surfaced). It had always been assumed that the text was at least this old, as the oldest Chinese translation was done by Lokakṣema in 179-180 A.D. The present manuscript has confirmed this assumption. The text is quite close to the later Nepalese version (eleventh-twelfth century A.D.), but differs from Lokakṣema's translation, suggesting that more than one Indian recension may have existed as early as the second to third century A.D.

The manuscript preserves, among other things, a discussion from the end of chapter one between Śāriputra and Subhūti, two senior disciples of the Buddha who figure prominently in the Prajñāpāramitā literature. On the first and second line of the first fragment the names Śāriputra and Subhūti may be read. From later editions of the text we know that in the section Śāriputra names Subhūti as ranking first among the teachers of the law (*dharma*). The text goes: "Addressed like this the venerable Subhūti spoke to the venerable Śāriputra as follows: 'This is the true state of things of the Lord, venerable Śāriputra, for disciples not dependant on the moments of existence (*dharmas*). In whatever (way) they are questioned, they find (a way) out and do not obscure the true state of things, and do not turn away from the true state of things.'"



+ [k]. [l]. [p]ut[illegible]hītā vā imā. prajñāpāramitāṃ bhāṣ[i]y. mānā. .. + + + + + + + + + + + + + +
subhūti bhaga[illegible]etad avoca ◊ duradhimuccā bhagavaṃ pra + + + + + + + + + + + + +
nena anartthike[illegible]paśrutena hīnavīryena [h]īnādhim. [k].ī[k]e + + + + + + + + + + + +
ambhīrā vaday[illegible] + + .r. [j]ñāpāramitā duradhimuccanatāya āha rūpaṃ subhūti abaddhaṃ a[m]u[k]t..
jñāna asvabhāv[illegible]bhūti abaddhaṃ amuktaṃ r[ū]pas[y]a subhūti p[ū]rva. to

Translation of a Sanskrit Parallel[1]

[...] "Furthermore, Subhūti, a son or daughter of a noble family may come into the hands of a bad friend, or may not practise, (rl) *or may be attached to* the group of five aggregates (*skandha*), or he may *exalt himself,* disparage *others*, and look to do evil. *A son or daughter of a noble family* may be endowed. also with the four attributes, he may think that *this Perfection of Wisdom* has to be opposed *when it is preached*, taught and explained."

(r2) *Then the venerable Subhūti spoke to the Lord as follows: "It is hard to strive zealously for the Perfection of Wisdom, O Lord,* for one who is without effort, who is without wholesome roots, and who has come into the hands of bad friends."

The Lord spoke: (r3) "*It is so, Subhūti, it is so*. It is hard to strive zealously for the Perfection of Wisdom for one who is without effort, *whose wholesome roots are small, who is dull-witted, without abilities, who has learnt little, has inferior vigour, inferior devotion, ...* inferior knowledge, (r4) *who is supported by bad friends, is neither a listener* nor a questioner by nature, without effort (with regard to) wholesome religious deeds (*dharmas*)."

Subhūti spoke: "*How deep, O Lord, is this Perfection of Wisdom, since it is so hard to strive for with zeal?*"

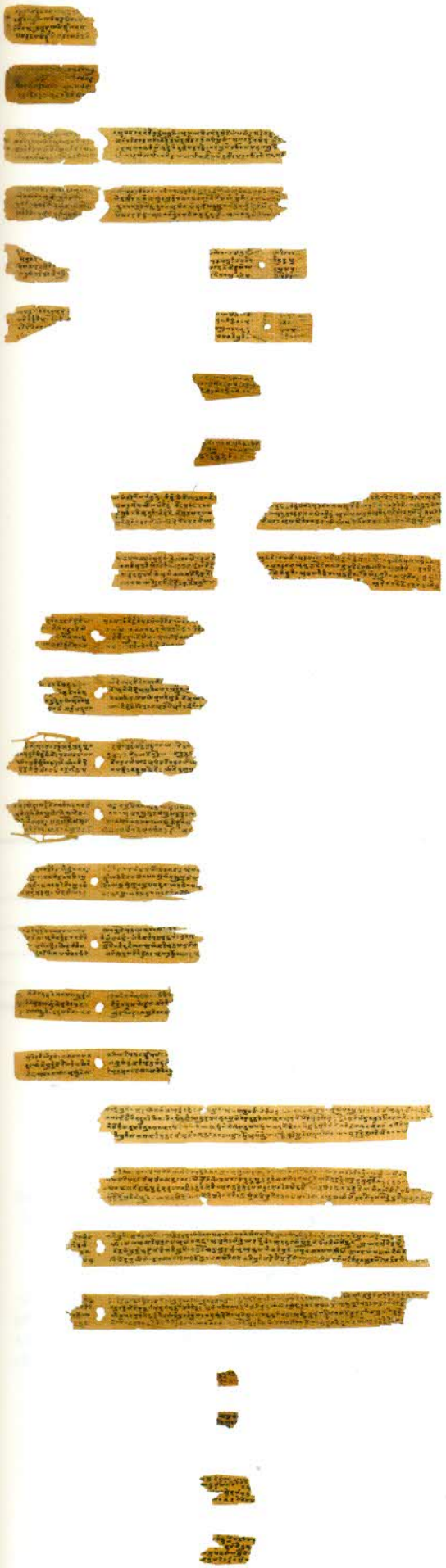
The Lord spoke: "*Form, Subhūti, is neither bound nor freed. (r5) What is the reason?* Because form has no own being, form is neither bound nor freed; in the same way, Subhūti, sensation, perception, mental formations, (and) consciousness are neither bound nor freed. *What is the reason? Because consciousness has no own being, consciousness, Subhūti, is neither bound nor freed. Form in the past, Subhūti, (v1) is neither bound nor freed.* It is because, Subhuti, form *has no own being in the past.* [...]

1 Conze 1970: 60-61; text in italics is found in the fragments above.

Mahāyāna Sūtra

The Mahāyāna Sūtra Manuscript

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. I, 63-218, vol. II, 45-49, and vol. III, 293-298
Editors: Kazunobu Matsuda, Jens Braarvig, Paul Harrison, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, and Asao Iwamatsu
Material: Palm leaf
Script: North Western Gupta
Date: 5th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit



This composite manuscript must originally have been well over 550 folios in length and contained many texts. Four sūtras of varying length have been identified so far. The manuscript also presents us with the first identified attempted forgery so far found in this collection of manuscripts from Afghanistan.

Background

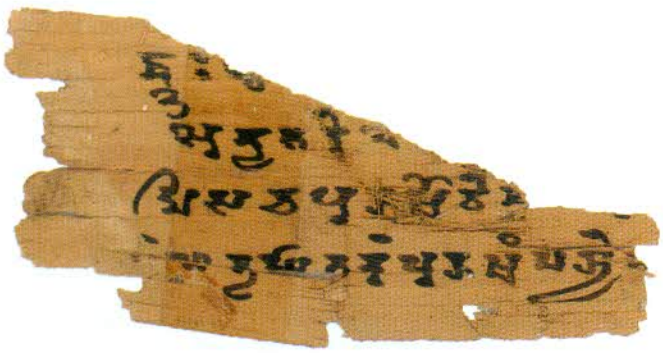
Several fragments of different sūtras have been found to belong to a single larger manuscript, and this manuscript has been named "The Mahāyāna Sūtra Manuscript". Sūtra collections of this nature are found in the Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist canons, such as for instance the *Ratnakūṭasūtra* and *Mahāsannipātasūtra*, but the present manuscript does not correspond to any known collection. Four sūtras of the collection have so far been identified: *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādanirdeśa, Pravāraṇāsūtra, Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa,* and *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra.*

The *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādanirdeśa* ("The Lion's Roar Teaching of Queen Śrīmālā") is one of the most famous Mahāyāna sūtras representative of the Tathāgatagarbha theory. In it we meet Queen Śrīmālā, the daughter of King Prasenajit and wife of King Yaśomitra of Ayodhyā, relating here understanding of the true doctrine, to which the Buddha listens and gives his affirmation. The sūtra gained immense popularity in China and Japan mainly due to its non-monastic form of religion. The Tathāgatagarbha theory teaches that all sentient beings contain the potential for awakening, and liken it to a seed, or foetus (*garbha*), that is merely temporarily veiled due the obstructions from the *kleśas* (disturbing emotions). Apart from a few scattered quotations the present manuscript is the only original version discovered to far.

The *Pravāraṇasūtra* is connected to the Pravāraṇa festival held on the final day of the rainy season. There are many versions of this sūtra, and with the exception of one Chinese version they all belong to the Āgamas (early discourses). The exception is also classified as an Āgama, but in content it has no connection to the standard Pravāraṇasūtras. It is therefore perhaps curious that the present *Pravāraṇasūtra* is included in this collection, which is otherwise of a purely Mahāyānistic character. The sūtra does, however, exhibit certain characteristics that might support its classification as Mahāyāna, such as the fact that the Buddha is dwelling with eighty-four thousand monks, a number far exceeding the that appearing in any of the Āgamas.

The *Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa* belongs to the great mass of literature representing the middle period of Mahāyāna sūtra literature. As such it is quite difficult to date with certainty, as it neither represents any outstanding or special doctrinal viewpoint, nor has been much employed as a canonical source in later scholastic literature. It is however still interesting for, among other things, its standpoints on the teachings and implications of emptiness, and its views on arrogance and judging others for their religious views. It also warns against the purely rhetorical use of Mahāyāna doctrines, such as the teaching on emptiness.

The *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra* is extant in several Chinese and a Tibetan translation, but this is the first appearance of a Sanskrit edition so far. It is an interesting text both because of its content, and because it is among a small group of Mahāyāna sūtras already translated by Lokakṣema in the late second century A.D. It is rich in narrative incident, packed with significant doctrinal terms, as well as being philosophically complex and demanding. Being one of the most sophisticated and evolved Mahāyāna sūtras we can date to this early period, it shows that Mahāyāna Buddhism had attained an advanced level of development by the middle of the second century A.D. The most prominent figure in the sūtra is the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, who is established to be of superior insight. The other main character is king Ajātaśatru, a contemporary of the Buddha, and famous for being guilty of the heinous crime of patricide. The guilt-ridden king turns to Mañjuśrī to find relief for his sin (thus the *kaukṛtyavinodanā,* or "dispelling of remorse", of the title), and the bodhisattva uses the occasion to teach the ultimate emptiness or unreality of all things.



Transliteration, folio 536, recto (erased *akṣaras* on black background)

1 jñaḥ [a] + + + + + + + + + /// .....

2 anyatare[ṇ]. + + + + + + /// .....

3 mi sa ca puruṣo vi .. + + .. + /// .....

4 ..ṃ [mā]tṛghātakaṃ puruṣaṃ paśye .. /// .....

The Manuscript

The complete *Mahāyāna Sūtra Manuscript* must have been at least 550 folios long, a conclusion based on the fact that the highest folio number reconstructed with certainty in the last part of the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra* is already no. 549. Of the four texts described above there are a total of 34 complete or fragmentary folios preserved. In addition there are a few fragments that appear to belong to the same manuscript, but for which the contents have not so far been identified. The script is throughout a variant of the North Western Gupta Book Script, which can be dated to the fifth century. The language is Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit.

A particularly interesting feature, albeit a sad one, is that among the fragments of this manuscript we find the first example of a forgery that has been identified in the collection (folio 536). The margins have been trimmed, part of the text has been erased, and a small hole has been pierced in the middle of the erased area. It is assumed that this was done by the local dealers before the manuscript was taken abroad, but as to the reason for this unwelcome treatment we can only speculate. Considering the sums of money involved in the manuscript trade, the multiplication of fragments must be an obvious temptation. It has however been possible to partly restore the missing part, first by using the Tibetan translation, and then by applying ultraviolet light to the fragment, enabling a definite reading of some of the previously invisible *akṣaras*.

/// [saṃ]ghena • rājāpy a[j]ā++++parivāraḥ++///
/// puruṣaś carimabhavika[ḥ]++taraṃ vṛkṣamū[l. sth.]///
/// mārabhūto bhikṣusaṃgha.y.++tasya mātṛ++///
/// [a]ho tāta ayaṃ mā[rg].++[mā]rga iti sa t.++///

Translation of a Tibetan Parallel[1]

"[...] Thereupon Prince Mañjuśrī rose from his seat and went forth from the palace of King Ajātaśatru, accompanied by the community of monks and his retinue. King Ajātaśatru too, accompanied by his retinue, followed behind Prince Mañjuśrī. As Prince Mañjuśrī went on his way, he saw a man sitting under a tree who, having taken the life of his mother, was weeping and wailing, saying "Because I have committed an evil act, I will certainly go to hell." And that man was one who was fit to be converted by Prince Mañjuśrī. Then Prince Mañjuśrī, in order to convert that man, conjured up a second man, and he also conjured up that [second] man's father and mother. Thereupon the phantom man, accompanied by his father and mother, approached the matricide, and at a distance not too far from him they got into a quarrel, in such a way that the real man could see, with the son saying "This is the way," and the father and mother saying, "Son, this is not the way." So saying they began to fight, as a result of which the phantom man took the life of his father and mother, and the real man saw that phantom man take the life of his father and mother. [...]"

1 Q tsu 269a2-b7; this section corresponds roughly with the partially preserved folio of the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra* depicted above; translated in BMSC vol. II, 48-49.

Mahāyāna Sūtra

Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 89-159
Editors: Paul Harrison and Shōgo Watanabe
Material: Birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 6th-7th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit

This manuscript is in an excellent state of preservation, preserving 3/5 of the complete text. When combined with the two other significant early manuscript witnesses, it gives us a good picture of the early stages of development of this influential Mahāyāna text.

Background

The *Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā* is one of the most celebrated and historically significant works of the voluminous Prajñāpāramitā corpus. It is most highly revered in the Buddhist traditions of East Asia, wherefrom, in English translation, it has received its more famous name, "The Diamond Sūtra". In regular sūtra style it recounts an incident where the monk Subhūti asks the Buddha a series of questions, and in his answers the Buddha is trying to help Subhūti let go of his preconceived limited notions about the nature of reality.

Since F. Max Müller first performed an analysis of a parallel Sanskrit and Chinese edition in 1881 several more Sanskrit editions have been made available to the scholarly world. The present manuscript may be joined with the two other important early manuscript witnesses found at Dandān Uiliq in Eastern Turkestan and Gilgit in Pakistan to give a good picture of how the text looked at this early point in its development.

The Manuscript

The manuscript is made from birch bark, and is in an excellent state of preservation. It consists of the 21 folios, representing approximately 60 % of the text, and it is therefore assumed that it originally covered 35 folios. It is the second text in the manuscript, starting on folio 26, preceded by the *Bhaiṣajyagurusūtra*, which suggests that at the time Mahāyāna Buddhists regarded the *Vajrcchedikāprajñāpāramitā* as one of a set of Mahāyāna sūtras. It is written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, dated to the sixth-seventh century A.D. The language is a fairly regular Sanskrit, without the Prakrit colouring that can be observed in the earlier manuscript from Eastern Turkestan.

Transliteration, folio 26, recto

1 bhaṃgaṃ nā<ma> dharma<pa>ryāyaṃ mahāyānasūtraṃ samāptaḥ ‖ ❋ ‖ namo śākyamuna
2 yes tathāgatāyārhate samyaksaṃbudhāya : ‖ evaṃ mayā śrutam ekasmin [sa]ma
3 ye bhagavān* śrāvastyāṃ viharati sma • jetavane • anāthapiṇḍadasyārame maha
4 tā bhikṣusaṃghena sārdham a○rdhatrayodaśabhir bhikṣuśataiḥ atha khalu bhagavān*
5 pūrvāhṇakālasamaye nivāsya [pā]tracīvaram ādāya • śrāvastīṃ mahānagarīṃ pi
6 ṇḍāya prāviśat* atha khalu bhagavan* śrāvastīṃ mahānagarī piṇḍāyaṃ cari

Translation of the Introduction[1]

Hail to Śākyamuni, the Realized, Worthy and Perfectly Awakened One!

This is the word as I heard it once when the Lord was staying in Śrāvastī, in Jeṭṛ's Grove, at the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍada, together with a large community of monks 1,250 monks strong.

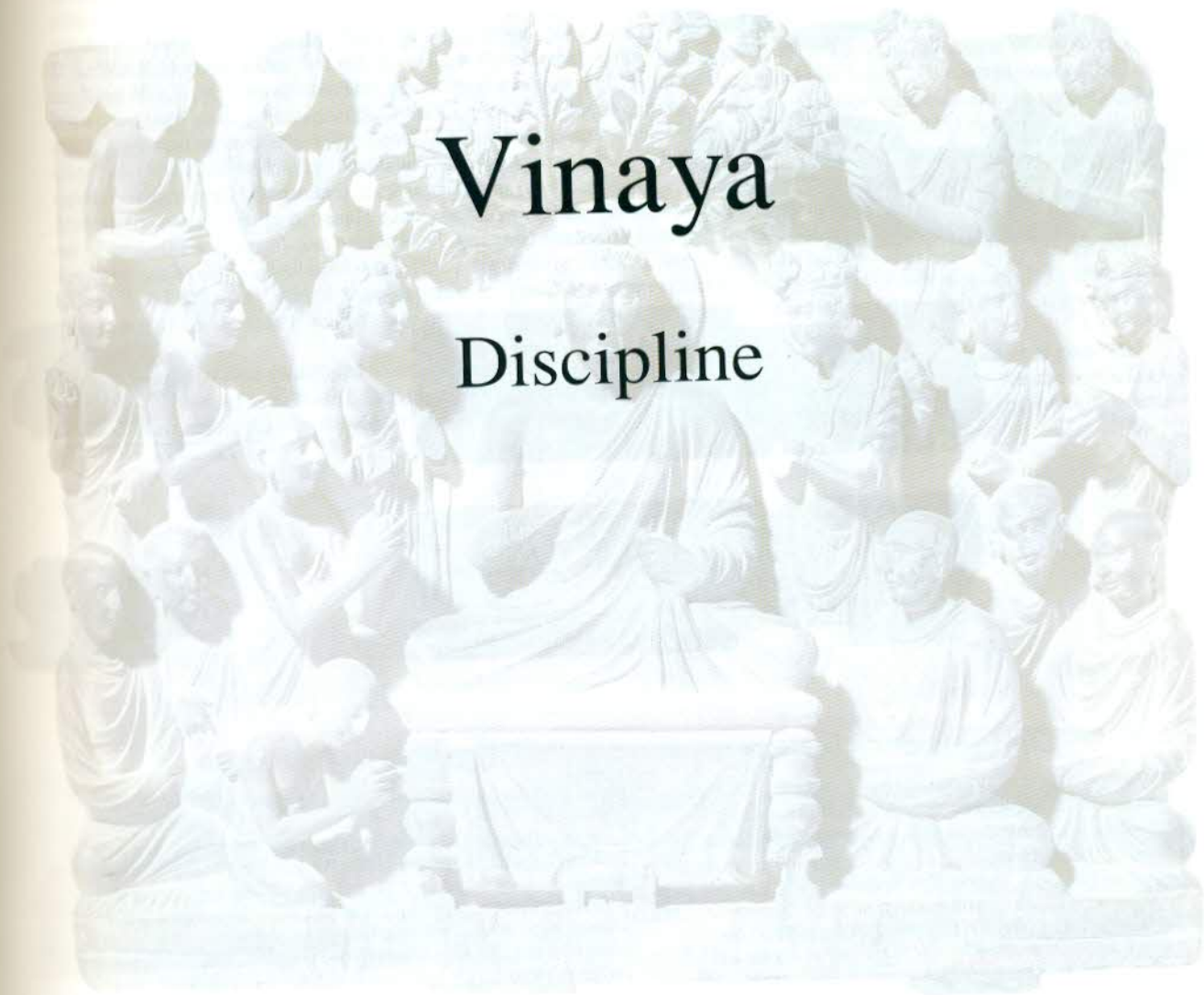
Then the Lord got dressed in the morning, took his bowl and robe, and entered the great city of Śrāvastī for alms. Then, after walking around the great city of Śrāvastī for alms, the Lord returned in the afternoon after eating the almsfood, washed his feet, and sat down on the seat set out for him with legs crossed, body held erect and attention directed in front of him. Then a great many monks approached the Lord, and after approaching him they prostrated themselves at the Lord's feet, circumambulated the Lord three times, and sat down to one side. [...]

1 BMSC vol. III, 142; corresponds roughly to the above depicted folio; the first line, containing the end of the *Bhaiṣajyagurusūtra*, has not been translated.

3

Vinaya

Discipline



Vinaya

Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 161-176
Editor: Seishi Karashima
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Early Western Gupta
Date: 4th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

Two manuscripts contain various basic rules for the Buddhist monastic order. The texts are shown to belong to the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school, possibly a further indication of the sectarian origin of the collection as a whole.

Background

The *Prātimokṣa* is the collection of monastic rules (*vinaya*) for the ordained Buddhist community. The rules vary in degree and importance, from the very basic rules against killing, stealing, lying, and sexual misconduct, to lesser misdemeanours having to do with different situations in which the ordained might find him- or herself in daily life situations. The schisms that lead to the establishment of the early schools of Buddhism were mostly based on differences in vinaya, such as was the case when the Sthaviravādas and Mahāsaṃghikas parted ways, probably the earliest such schism.

The Manuscripts

Based on comparisons it has been concluded that the present manuscripts probably are part of the *Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga* of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins, a subgroup of the Mahāsāṃghika school. This strengthens the theory suggested in relation with the *Caṅgīsūtra*, that the origin of the collection was probably a Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravadin monastery, somewhere in the vicinity of Bāmiyān.

The material for both manuscripts is palm leaf, and they are written, respectively, in an early Western Gupta script, probably dated to the fourth century A.D., and Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, probably to be dated to the sixth century A.D. The first manuscript consists of four fragments that preserve two incomplete folios. The second consists of one complete folio and five fragments, preserving parts of two more folios.

The manuscripts contain rules for the monk, all of the *pācattika* (downfall) category, requiring repentance and expiation. The first contains a commentary on two consecutive rules, prohibiting a monk from having a needle case made of ivory, bone, horn, etc., and from having a couch or chair made with excessively long legs. The second contains rules against allowing someone (probably a novice) to start and stop reciting *dharmas* simultaneously with him, and against boasting of having acquired superhuman *dharmas*. It also contains an episode in which a monk, Dravya Mallaputra, an allocator of meals for the Order, was blamed unjustly for partiality by the notorious group of six monks who were given a coarse meal for servants at a house allotted to them, because they went there either too early in the morning or too late at midday.

Translation of the Manuscript Written in Early Western Gupta[1]

"(A needle case should be made of) (1r1) ... brass, arvagata(?), pine tree, dalbergia or bamboo-tholikā(?) ..."

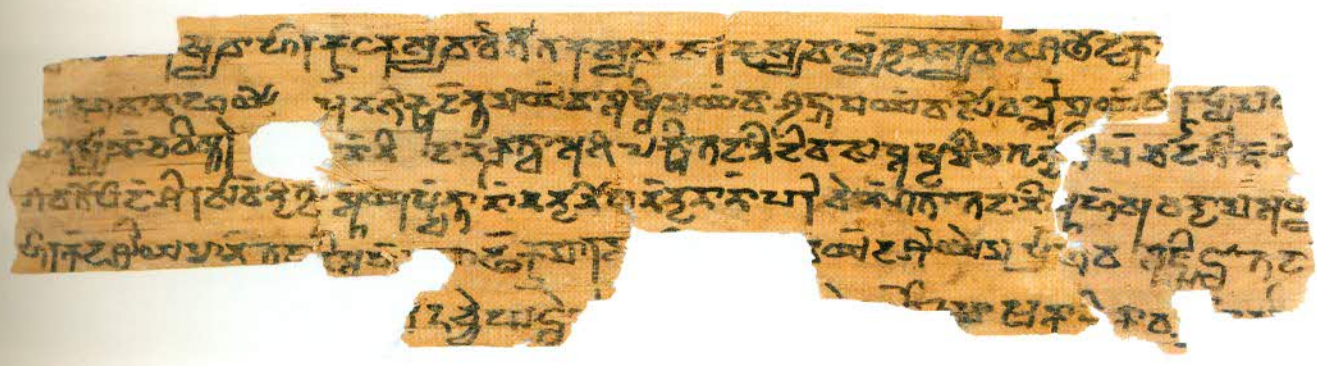
(r2) ... The Lord, therefore, stated. "If a monk (has a needle case made) that is made of ivory, made of bone, made of horn, made of gold, made of silver, (or made of jewels, that is a pācattika requiring destruction [of the object in question])."

(The Lord,) (r3) (the teacher of gods) and humans, (was staying in Śrāvastī). Details are as given elsewhere.

At that time, on the special auspicious days, namely the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth (of every fortnight), people (used to go out to salute the Lord's feet. Princes of the King of Kosala also went out) (r4) (to salute the Lord's feet.) Having saluted the Lord's feet with their heads, they went to the chamber (pariveṇa) of the venerable Nandana and Upanandana. Then, they (i.e. the princes) said: "We salute you, o honourable ones!" (Nandana and Upanandana said: "Welcome, o princes! Welcome, o princes!" They, then,) (r5) (said: "We wish) to see (your) dwelling." They (i.e. Nandana and Upanandana) replied: "Please, o princes! ... We shall show (you)." Being invited as guests, they then ... (r6) ... (Canopies of beds?) were high, rubbed, (polished and very white.) ... (v1) ... red ... (v2) ... (Nandana and Upanandana said: "These couches) are ours." They (i.e. the princes), then, said: "These are, o honourable ones, (not) suitable (for monks)." They, then, said: "For whom on earth are they suitable?" (The princes replied: "They are suitable only for a king or a prince.") ... (v3) ... (The monks said: "Aren't we princes? If the World-Honoured One had not) gone forth from home into the homeless state, he would have become your Wheel-Turning King. You, in your turn, would have been the Lord's servants, agitated by respect (for him) ... (We are princes of the Lord. Even if we used more extravagant decorations, we would deserve them, let alone these poor articles.") ... (v4) ... (Having heard this, the princes) were shocked, dismayed, ashamed and nonplussed. Having heard this matter, (other) monks told the Lord (about it). (The Lord said: "Call Nandana and Upanandana here!" When they came, the Lord said to them:) (v5) ("Is it true, o monks Nandana and) Upanandana, as it is said, that, on the special auspicious days, namely the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth (of every fortnight), people come out (to salute) the Tathāgata's (feet. The princes of the King of Kosala also came out to salute the Tathāgata's feet.) (v6) (Having saluted the Lord's feet with their heads,) they went to your chamber,—the Lord described this event in detail until—(that the princes were shocked, depressed, ashamed and abashed?" They replied: "Yes, it is true." The Lord said: "Why did you decorate the couches and get criticised by lay people? From now on, (2r1) when a monk has a couch or chair made,) the legs should be made measuring eight fingers (of the standard measure) long, except for the notched part.

A special case (which led to a modification of the rule) occurred as follows: The Lord, (the teacher of gods) and humans, (was staying in Śrāvastī). Details (r2) (are given elsewhere. The Lord) set forth (the rule that:) "When a monk has a couch or chair made, the legs should be made measuring eight fingers of the standard measure long, (except for the notched

1 BMSC vol. III. 161.



Folio 1, recto

Vinaya

Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. I, 233-241 and vol. II, 215-228
Editor: Seishi Karashima
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 6th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

part.)" Then, the venerable (r3) (Nandana and Upanandana), leaving aside the part as long as (the Lord allowed), cut the legs, (and then) put supports of the very same length (as the offcuts under them). Then, on the special auspicious days, (namely the eighth, the fourteenth and) the fifteenth (of every fortnight), people used to go out (r4) (to salute the Lord's feet.) The princes of (the King of) Kosala went out to salute the Lord's feet. Having saluted the Lord's feet with their heads, they went to the chamber of the venerable (Nandana and Upanandana). Then, they (i.e. the princes) said: (r5) ("We salute you, o honourable ones, ..." ... Nandana and Upanandana) said: "Welcome, o princes! Welcome, o princes!" They, then, said: "We, o honourable ones, wish to see (your) dwelling." (Nandana and Upanandana took them to their dwelling and) said: "Look! ... (r6) ..." (In the dwelling, they saw?) rows of .., rows of (figures of) beasts, rows of Makara (figures), rows of (figures of) vines, creepers and of elder monks. , The ceiling(?) was high, plastered(?), rubbed, polished and very white. ... (v1) ... (Having seen that the legs of the couches were cut to the approved size and supports were put under the legs, the princes asked: "Why) did you (cut off? ... and) destroy these legs of the couches?" They, then, replied: "(Leaving aside) the part as long as the Lord allowed, o princes, (we cut off the legs)." ... (v2) ... (Having heard this matter, other monks) told the Lord (about it). The Lord said: "Call Nandana and Upanandana (here)!" When they were summoned (and came), the Lord said: "Is it true, (o monks Nandana and Upanandana, as it is said, that) the Tathāgata (set forth the rule that:) (v3) ('When a monk has a couch or chair made), the legs should be made measuring eight fingers of the standard measure long, except for the notched part.'; that you(?) indeed(?) cut off the legs, (leaving aside) the part as long as the Tathāgata (allowed), (and then put supports) of the very same length (as the offcuts under them); (v4) (that, then, on the special auspicious days, namely) the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth (of every fortnight), people come out to salute the Tathāgata's feet; that the princes of the King of Kosala, then, came out to salute the Tathāgata's feet; and so on, until (that ...) ?" (v5) (They replied:) "Yes, o Lord!" The Lord said: "From now on, a support is not allowed either." Then, the Lord said to the monks: "(Assemble) all the monks who (are staying in the city of) Śrāvastī!" (v6) (Then, the Lord) told the monks about this matter, and explained its evil consequences, and also, concerning this case, (... in various ways?, and then gave?) them (a teaching which was befitting?) and suitable. (Then he said: "I set forth a rule for all monks, for the sake of the ten sorts of benefits, and so on, until: One who has heard this once, should hear again: 'When a monk has a couch or chair made, the legs should be made measuring eight fingers of the standard measure long, except for the notched part. Should he have it made in excess of that, there is a pācattika requiring cutting down.'")

Translation of the Manuscript Written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I[2]

(If [a monk recites:] "Consciousness through the eye is impermanent," [and one who is not ordained then] starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, repeats, recites after [the monk], "Consciousness through the eye is impermanent," and the monk) (3r1) continues (?) (without stopping [him]), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

Likewise, (if a monk recites) "Consciousness through the ear," "Consciousness through the nose," "Consciousness through the tongue," "Consciousness through the body," "Consciousness through the mind is impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, (r2) repeats, recites after (the monk), "Consciousness through the mind is impermanent," (and the monk) continues (?) without stopping (him), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

(If a monk recites) "Contact by the eye is impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, repeats, recites after (the monk), "Contact by the eye is impermanent," (r3) (and the monk) continues (?) without stopping (him), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

Likewise, (if a monk recites) "Contact by the ear," "Contact by the nose," "Contact by the tongue," "Contact by the body," "Contact by the mind is impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, (r4) recites without pausing, repeats, recites after (the monk), "Contact by the mind is impermanent," (and the monk) continues (?) without stopping (him), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

(If a monk recites) "The feeling born of contact by the eye is impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, (r5) stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, repeats, recites after (the monk), "The feeling born of contact by the eye is impermanent," (and the monk) continues (?) without stopping (him), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

Likewise, (if a monk recites) "The feeling born of contact by the ear is impermanent," "The feeling born of contact by the nose is impermanent," "The feeling born of contact by the tongue is (v1) impermanent," "The feeling born of contact by the body is impermanent," "The feeling born of contact by the mind is impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, repeats, recites after (the monk), "The feeling born of contact by the mind is impermanent," (v2) (and the monk) continues(?) without stopping (him), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

(If a monk recites) "Visible objects are impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, repeats, recites after (the monk), "Visible objects are impermanent," (and the monk) continues (?) without stopping (him), the monk (v3) commits a *pācattika* offence.

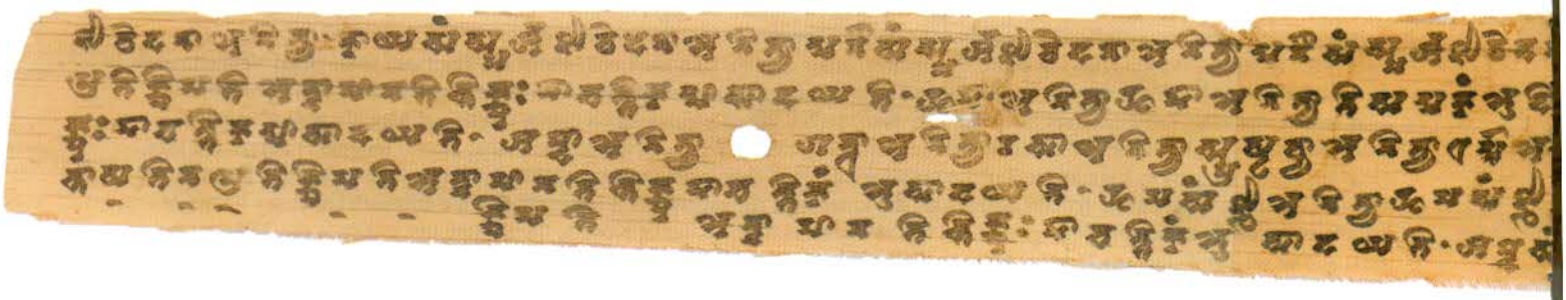
(Likewise, if a monk recites) "Sounds are impermanent," "Smells are impermanent," "Flavours are impermanent," "Contacts are impermanent," "Mental phenomena are impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, repeats, (v4) recites after (the monk), "Mental phenomena are impermanent," (and the monk) continues (?) without stopping (him), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

(If a monk recites) "Perceptions of visible objects are impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultaneously, stops simultaneously, recites without pausing, repeats, recites after (the monk), "Perceptions of visible objects are impermanent," (v5) (and the monk) continues (?) without stopping (him), the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.

(Likewise, if a monk recites) "Perceptions of sounds," "Perceptions of smells," "Perceptions of flavours," "Perceptions of contacts," "Perceptions of mental phenomena are impermanent," (and one who is not ordained then) starts simultane-

2 BMSC vol. II, 218-219, 223-225, and vol. I, 236-239.

Vinaya



Folio 3 (136), verso

ously, (stops) simultaneously, (recites without pausing, repeats, recites after [the monk]), "Perceptions of mental phenomena are impermanent"; ([and the monk] continues (?) without stopping [him], the monk commits a *pācattika* offence.) ...

... (If a monk ...) (4r1) says, "I have attained and realised ... ," and it is true, he commits a *pācattika* offence.

If a certain monk, in regard to himself, concerning himself, says, "...," (he commits a transgression) of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed by self-restraint.

If (he) says, " ...," (r2) he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed by confession.

If (he says), "I have attained and realised concentrations and the fruit of (these) concentrations," (and it is true, he commits a *pācattika* offence.)

Likewise, these dharmas which one who is concentrated in his mind, ... (?)

(If a certain monk, in regard to himself, concerning himself,) (r3) says, " ... One ought to rely on these dharmas. These dharmas have been attained and realised," he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed by self-restraint.

(If he) says, " ... have been attained and realised," (he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed) by confession.

(If he ...) says, "(I have attained) (r4) and realised ...," and it is true, he commits a *pācattika* offence.

If a certain monk, (in regard to) himself, concerning himself, says, "...," he (commits a transgression) of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed by self-restraint.

(If he ...,) (r5) he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed by confession.

If (he says), "I have attained (and realised) tranquillity and insight," (and it is true, he commits a *pācattika* offence.)

If (a monk), in regard to himself, concerning himself, says, " ..., (v1) mental concentration, knowledge, and release," he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed by self-restraint.

(If he says, "...," he commits a transgression of the Vinaya rules which can be redressed by confession.

If he says, "I have attained and realised ...," and it is true,) (v2) he commits (a *pācattika* offence.)

If a certain monk, in regard to himself, concerning himself, (says:) "The three kinds of knowledge, the three states, the three kinds of concentrations are thus," he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed (by self-restraint.)

(If he says, "...,") (v3) he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules (which can be redressed by confession).

If he (says), "I have attained and realised the three kinds of concentrations," and it is true, he commits a *pācattika* offence.

(If a certain monk), in regard to himself, concerning himself, (says, " ..."), (v4) he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules (which can be redressed by self-restraint).

If he says, "The four applications of mindfulness of mine," he commits a transgression of the *Vinaya* rules which can be redressed by confession.

If he says, "I have attained and realised ...," (and it is true, he commits a *pācattika* offence.)

(If a certain monk), (v5) in regard to himself, concerning himself, (says:) "The four right exertions, the four bases of transcendental knowledge, the four concentrations, the four ..., (the four) practices, the four kinds of logical analysis ... are thus," ...

(5r1) ... (The elder monks were graceful in deportment) in carrying (their cloaks, bowls and) robes. Their sense faculties were turned inwards; their minds were not turned outwards. They stood as one who had attained the essential rightness. Having accomplished their task, they were like elephants. When they entered (a village), they were graceful ...

(r2) ... They came out (of the village) with bowls, filled with (much steaming boiled rice, from which all the black specks had been removed, served with) various sauces, flavours and seasonings. Then the group of six venerable (monks) said (to *Dravya*): "Honoured sir, it is laid down by the Lord that acquisition of almsfood should be equal ...

(r3) ... *//bhāveti//* Now, is this (almsfood) and that one equal?"

The elder monks said: "You, venerable (monks) of the group of six (monks), entered (the village) thus too early!"

Then, at another (time), they (went to the village.) ...

(r4) "... Look! Look at the ox! Look at the ram! Look at the goat! Look at the owl!". They waited for the closing of the proper time. The women thought: "Perhaps there was (an offered meal) at *Je(tavana)* ...

(r5) ... After having served (their husband[s?] and children) with food, (the women) themselves ate and sat down. Now, they (i.e. the monks) entered the village) at the (very closing) of the proper time and said: "How are you? Give us a meal, *upāsikās*!" Then they (replied): "...

(r6) ... (We thought: 'Perhaps at *Jetavana* there was an offered) meal. For that very reason, these honourable ones of the group of six (monks) do not come.' We served (our) husband[s?] and children with food and we ourselves ate. Then ...

(v1) ... Then they gave (the monks) what (they) had cooked for the servants, slaves and labourers. (The monks) were given whatever (the women had cooked) and were obliged to go away. Then they ran out in all haste. *Jetavana* ...

(v2) ... (The elder monks were graceful in deportment) in advancing and in coming back, in looking forwards and looking around, in extending and withdrawing their arms, in carrying their cloaks, bowls and robes. Their sense faculties were turned inwards; (their minds) were not turned outwards.

(v3) (... were graceful), making the hearts of gods and men devoted to (them). Then they (came out of the village) with bowls, filled with much steaming boiled rice, from which all the black specks had been removed, served with various sauces, flavours and seasonings.

(v4) ... (We) ... entered (the village) at midday. Now, is this (almsfood) and that one equal?"

Then the elder monks said: "You entered (the village) thus very late at midday." Then they said: "Did not ... ?"

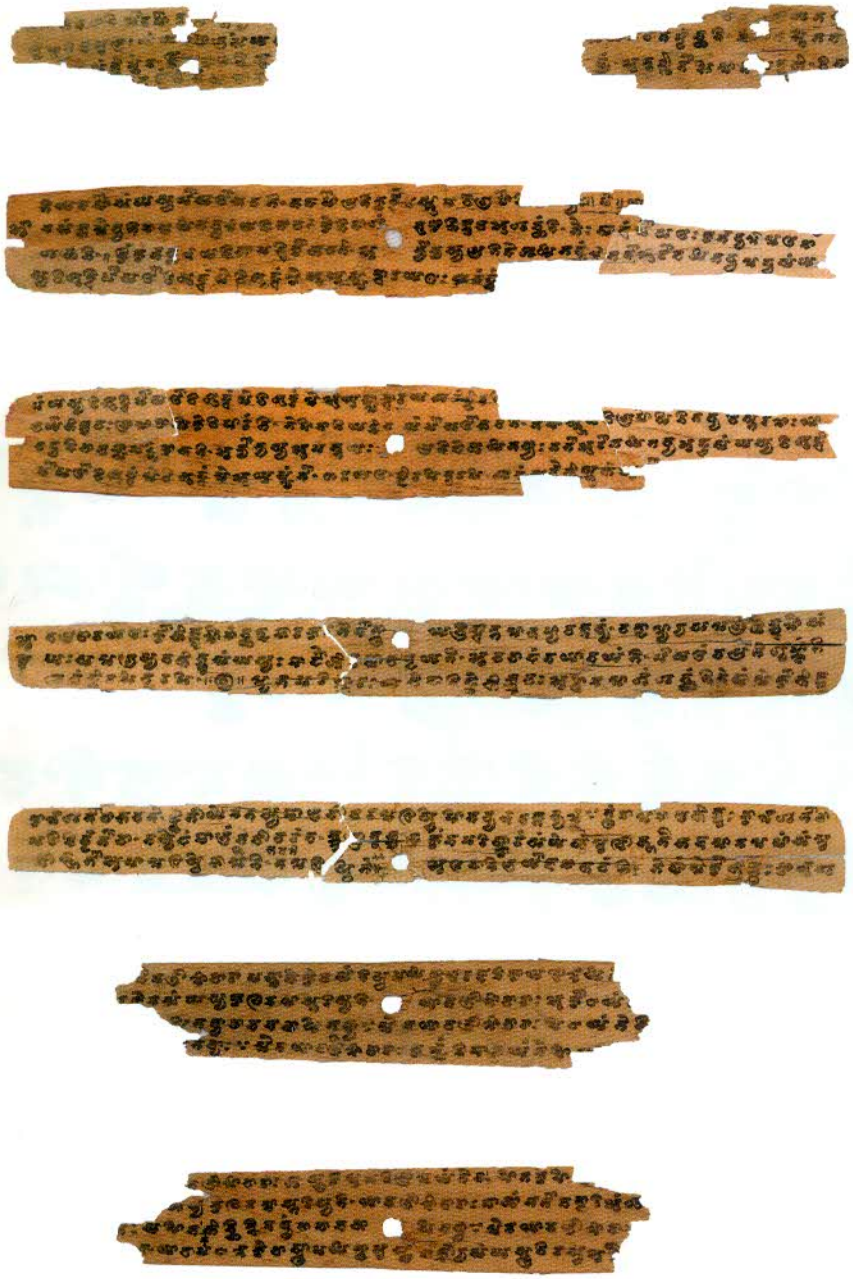
(v5) ... It is laid down (by the Lord that acquisition of almsfood should be equal ...) It seems that the venerable *Dravya Mallaputra* like an enemy by birth, causes almsfood to be acquired unequally. The venerable *Dravya Mallaputra* (told) this matter (to the Lord).

(v6) ... The Buddha said: "Is it true, monks of the group of six (monks), that *Dravya Mallaputra* was chosen (as an allocator of meals, lodgings, etc.) nine times by consent of the *Saṃgha* ...?"

Vinaya

Karmavācanā

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 229-237 and vol. III, 177-187
Editor: Jin-il Chung
Material: Palm leaf and Birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: ca. 6th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit



Karmavācanā are texts containing formulae for official acts in the Buddhist order, such as for example ordination.

Background

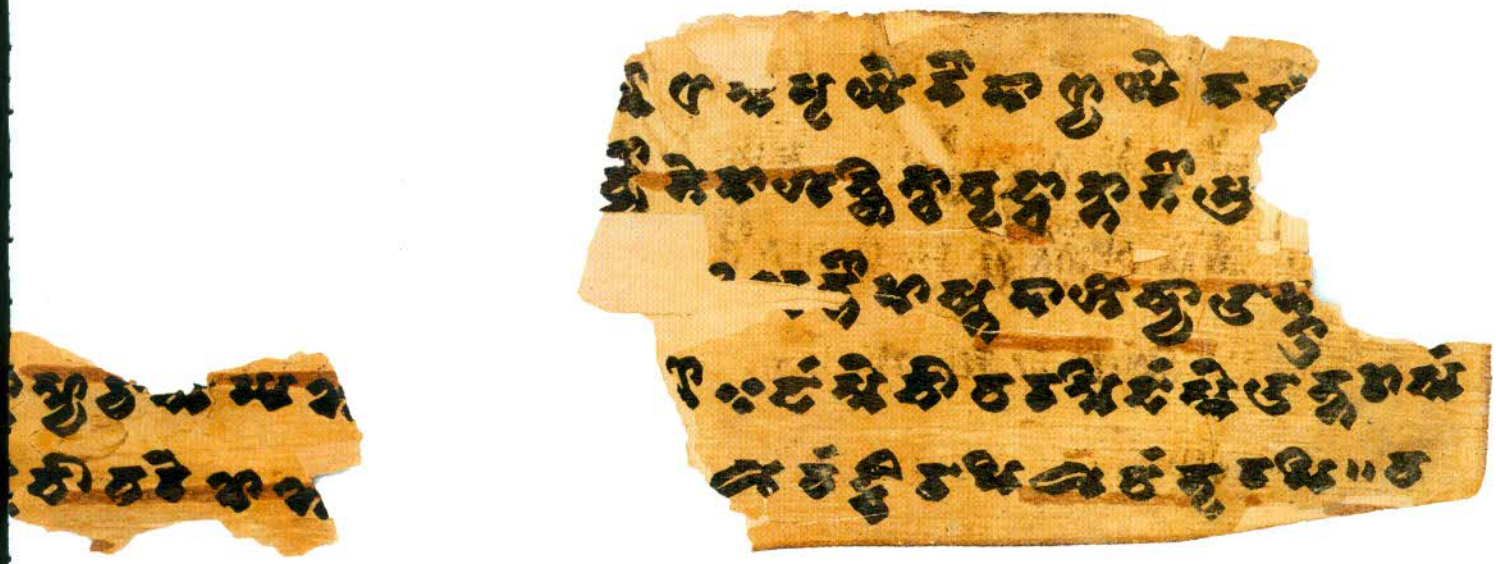
Various fragments preserve parts of different *karmavācanā* collections, i.e. texts containing formulae for official acts in the Buddhist order. They deal with such matters as ordination, confession, instructing others in the *dharma*, and acts to be carried out when a monk has passed away. Some fragments show some indications of belonging to a *karmavācanā* for nuns. There are also indications in some that they belong to a sub-branch of the Mahāsāṃghika school.

The Manuscript

The 17 fragments belong to two, or perhaps three, manuscripts, one or two made from palm leaf and one made from birch bark. They are all written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I. No date has been suggested by the editor, but a probable date can be set to about the sixth century A.D., the approximate period for the use of this script. The first four folios are concerned with the *upasaṃpadā* ceremony, the ritual of ordination. They contain parts relating to six out of the ten steps of the procedure, namely (3) instruction regarding the obstructive conditions (*antarāyika-dharma*), (4) consent of the order to the appearance of the ordinand (*upasaṃpādya*), (5) equipment of the ordinand with alms-bowl and robes (*pātra-cīvara*), (6) request of ordination by the ordinand (*upasaṃpadā*), (7) questioning of the obstructive conditions, and (9) granting of ordination. The other folios contain official acts in relation to *viśuddhipoṣatha* (declaration of one's own purity on poṣatha day), *kaṭhināstāra* (ritual spreading of the *kaṭhina* robe), *mānatva* (practice of humility because of grave offences), *ovādopasaṃkramaṇa* (going over towards nuns to instruct them), *āhvayana* (rehabilitation), and *mṛtapariṣkāra* (personal belongings of a dead monk).

Transliteration, folio 55, recto

1 yenopādhyā[y]. + saṃghamadhyam upasaṃkkrameya upa .. + +
2 madhyaṃ kṣamate taṃ saṃghasya yasmā tuṣṇī evam etad dhāra
3 rveṣāṃ pādā[bh]ivanditavyā yāva[n] n. + .. [○] ..ṃ + + + + + +
4 niṣīditavyaṃ tata smārayitvā pātracīva .. + + + + + .[y]. vandām
5 gam idam antarvvāsaṃ idaṃ tṛcīvaram adh[i] .[ṭh]. + + [m]e tṛ

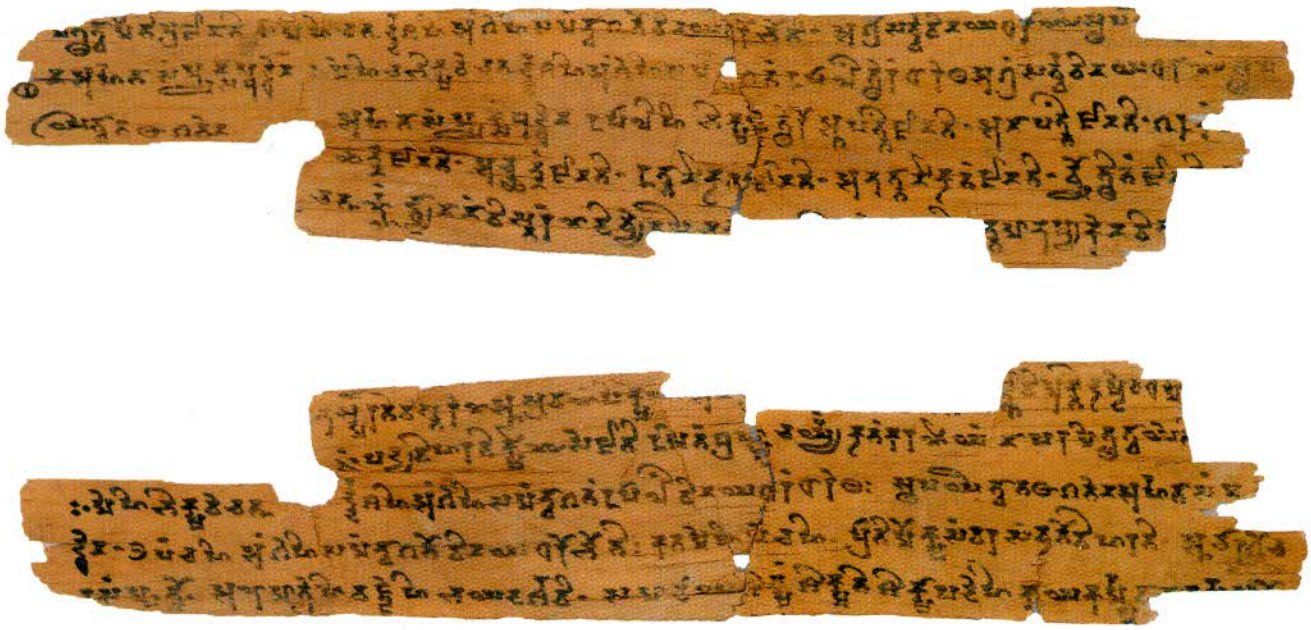


+ + + + + + + [lo] dha.[ma]pṛyenopādhyāyena [s].[ṃ] + +
+ + + + + + + + v[y]o tenāgacchitvā vṛddhāntāto pra + + +
+ + + + + + .. [ant]o hastapāśasyā utku + +
āry[as]. gha. [a] + + + [l]o idaṃ me cīvaram idaṃ me uttarāsaṃ
areṇa [a] + + + + + evaṃ dvir api evaṃ tṛr api ‖ va

Vinaya

On the Qualifications of a Vinayadhara

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 189-193
Editors: Shizuka Sasaki and Nobuyuki Yamagiwa
Material: Palm leaf
Script: North Western Gupta Brāhmī
Date: 5th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit



This unidentified manuscript contains a description of the fourteen qualities of a *Vinayadhara*, as well as a praise of Upāli as the foremost vinaya-expert. Some parallels have been found in various other texts.

Background

A *Vinayadhara* is a monk who is learned in the vinaya. The most famous *Vinayadhara* we find in the Buddhist literature is Upāli, a former barber of "low birth", who became one of the Buddha's ten chief disciples. Upāli figures in the present fragment, as he frequently does, as the foremost example of a *Vinayadhara* (except for the Buddha himself). Descriptions of the qualities of the *Vinayadhara* are also frequent in the literature, but the descriptions together with a statement making Upāli someone who possesses these qualities are only found in three places in the Chinese Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya, and in only one of these are the 14 conditions enumerated (T 22, 429a). We would expect then to have found a parallel to our fragment. However, the second part of the fragment does not fit with this text, but is found to be parallel with other texts in the Pāli canon. A definite identification of the fragment can therefore not be made at present.

The Manuscript

The fragment is made of palm leaf and preserves the major part of a folio with the enumeration 80. It is written in North Western Gupta Brāhmi dating approximately to the fifth century A.D.

Transliteration, folio 80, recto

1 m. tth. tvām[i]ti prajānati .. m. hi caturddaśahi aṃgehi samaṃnvāgato vinaya[dh]aro bhoti • agro sarvvavinayadharāṇāṃ sthapa[yi](tvā tathāgate)

2 na arhatā saṃmyaksambuddhena: imehi ca bhikṣave caturddaśahi aṃgehi sama(ṃn)vāgataṃ upāliṃ ttheraṃ dhāretha agraṃ sarvvavinayadharāṇāṃ sthapa

3 yitvā tathāgatena ○ arhatā saṃmyaksaṃbuddhena upāli hi bhikṣa[v]e tthero āpattiṃ jānati • anāpattiṃ jānati • garu[ka]ṃ .. + +

4 + + + + + + + ○ channaṃ jānati • acchannaṃ jānati • uttānīkṛta[ṃ] jānati • anuttānīkṛtaṃ jānati • vyotthitaṃ jā[n](at)i .. + +

5 + + + + + + + + + + + + .. caturṇṇaṃ ddhyānānāṃ vistareṇa divyena pi [cak](ṣu) + + .i .[e] + + (t)i(krā) ntamānuṣyakena vi[s](tareṇa) + +

verso

1 + + + + + + + + + + + nusmarati vistareṇa āsravāṇaṃ pi kṣa[y](aú) [an](ās)r. + + + + + + + .. jñāvimukti[ṃ] dṛṣṭe 'va dha[r]m[e] + + + +

2 + + + + + + + + ○ saṃpadya viharati kṣīṇā se jāti uṣitaṃ brahmacaryyaṃ kṛtaṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparam itthatāye [t]i + + + +

3 imehi bhikṣave catu ○ rddaśahi aṃgehi samaṃnvāgataṃ upāliṃ vinayadharaṃ dhāretha : ◊ sthapayitvā tathāgatena arhatā saṃm(yaksaṃbu)

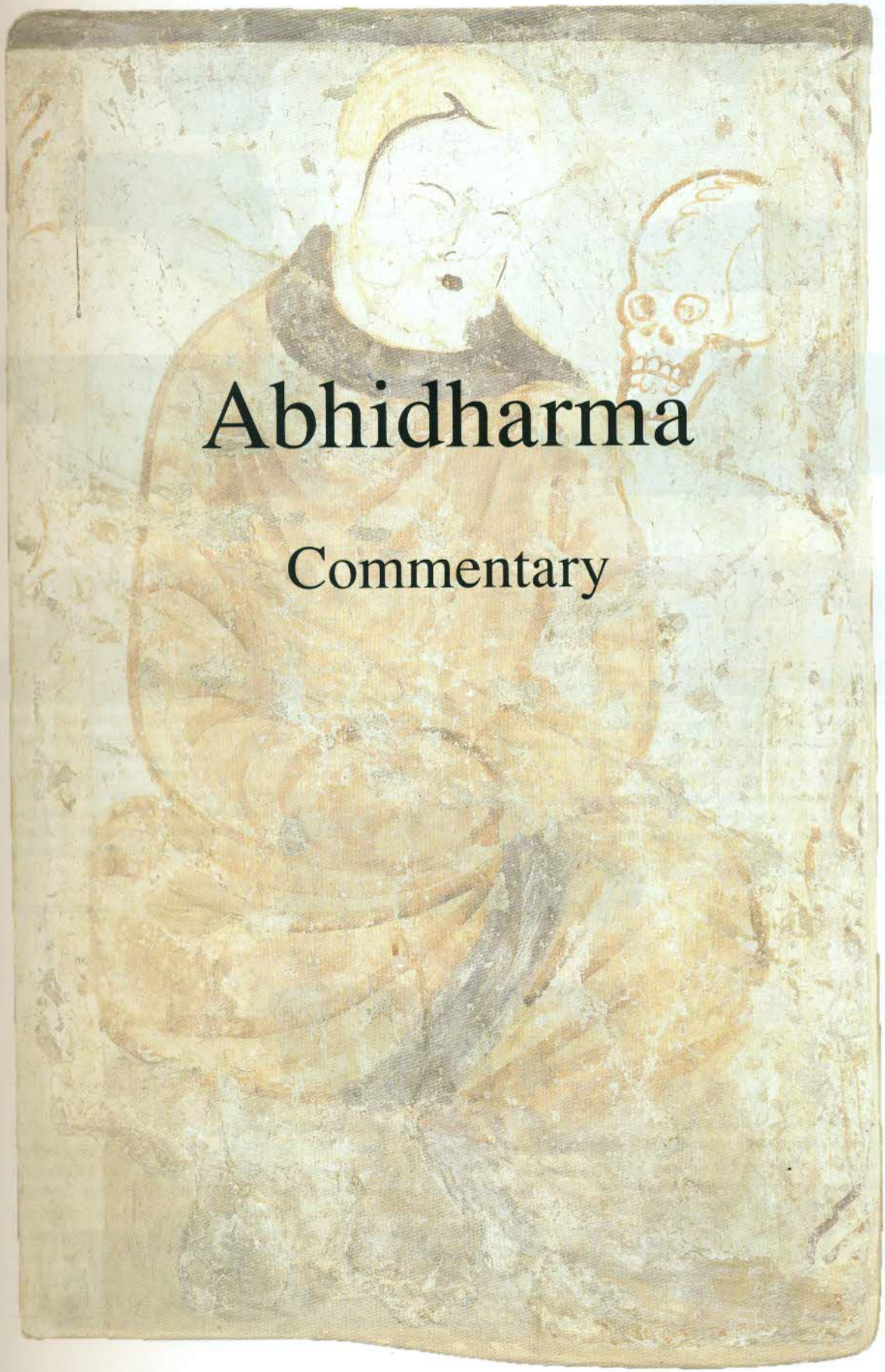
4 ddhena • ∋ paṃcahi aṃgehi samaṃnvāgato vinayadharo bhoti : katamehi [pa]ṃcahi ◊ prātimokṣasaṃvarasaṃvṛto viharati • ācā[ra]goca

5 r(a)saṃmpanno • aṇumāt[t]rehi vaj[j]ehi bhayadarśāvi • samādāy[a ś]ikṣaṃ śikṣati śikṣāpadehi kāyakarmma[vā](kka)r(mma) .. .o

Translation[1]

(r1) He knows it is so ... Possessed of these fourteen qualities he is a *Vinayadhara*, the foremost among *Vinayadharas* except for the Tathāgata, (r2) Arhat, and Samyaksaṃbuddha. Indeed, Monks, you should consider the Elder Upāli who is possessed of these fourteen qualities as the foremost of all *Vinayadharas* except for (r3) the Tathāgata, Arhat, and Samyaksaṃbuddha. Elder Upāli, Monks, knows what is an offence, knows what is not an offence, (knows what is) a serious offence, (r4) (knows what is a slight offence,) knows concealment, knows non-concealment, knows confessing, knows non-confessing, knows rehabilitation, (r5) (knows non-rehabilitation, ...) of the four *dhyānas*, read in full, the divine vision which excels the human, read in full, (v1) ... bears in mind, read in full, ... the destruction of the cankers ... here and now the freedom (v2) ... enters and abides therein. Destroyed is his birth, lived in the Brahma-faring, done is what was to be done, there is no more of being such and such. (v3) Indeed, Monks, you should consider the Elder Upāli who is possessed of these fourteen qualities as the foremost of all *Vinayadharas* except for the Tathāgata, Arhat, and Samyaksaṃbuddha. (v4) Possessed of five qualities he is a *Vinayadhara*. What are the five qualities? He lives controlled by the moral control under the *Prātimokṣa*, he is possessed of right conduct and resort, (v5) he sees danger even in the slightest faults, he trains himself by undertaking the precepts of training, conduct of body and conduct of speech ...

1 BMSC vol. III, 190.



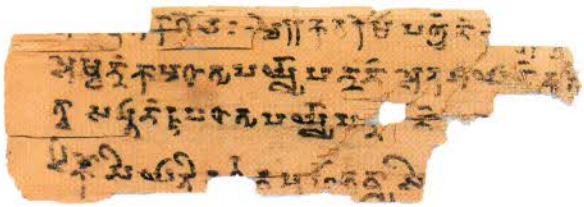
Abhidharma

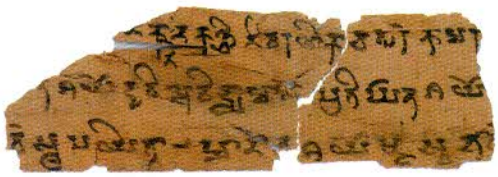
Commentary

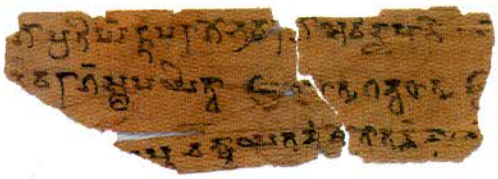
Abhidharma

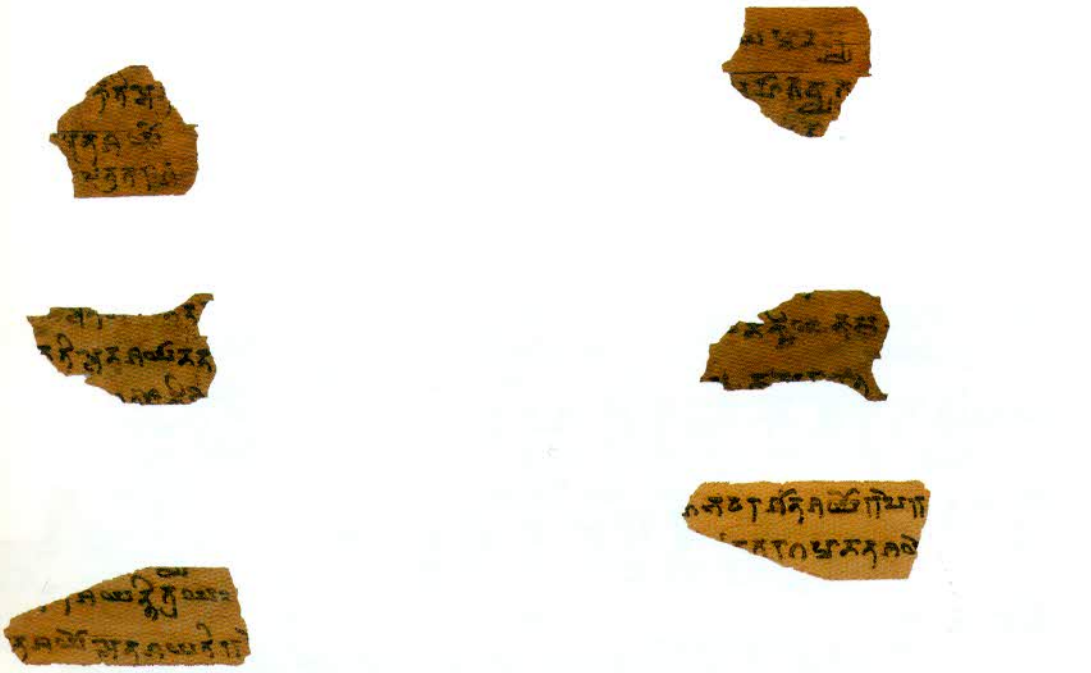
Śāriputra-Abhidharma

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 239-248
Editor: Kazunobu Matsuda
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Kuṣaṇa Brāhmi
Date: 3rd-4th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit









This manuscript exhibits clear parallels with the Chinese *Śāriputra-Abhidharma*. It presents a list of the ten *anuśayas*, propensities that bind one to the three types of existence.

Background

Several manuscripts in the collection are clearly of the abhidharma category, i.e. systematic representation of the contents of the sūtras. These have however been difficult to identify, in part because of the fact that most abhidharma material in Chinese translation belong exclusively to the Sarvāstivāda school. The material also ostensibly predate the Chinese translations, making it unlikely that any of the texts would correspond to those translated into Chinese. The present manuscript has however been found to exhibit clear parallels with the Chinese *Śāriputra-Abhidharma* (T 28, 690c3-691a4).

The Manuscript

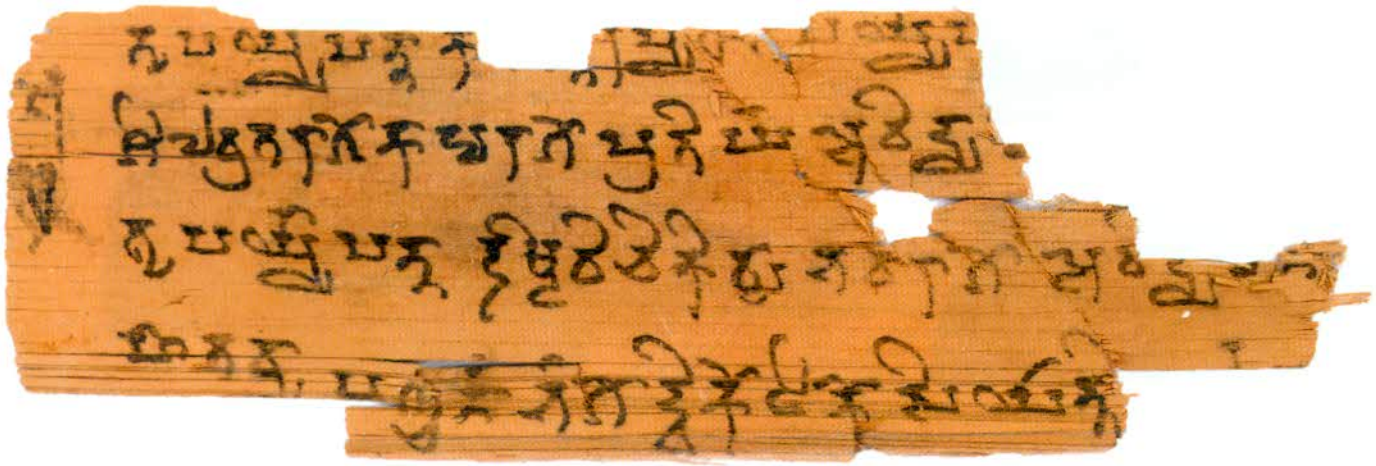
Nine fragments preserve parts of seven folios that probably belong to the same palm leaf manuscript. The second folio is numbered 160, which means that this is a text considerably longer than the Chinese *Śāriputra-Abhidharma*. The script is Kuṣāṇa Brāhmi, and it probably dates to around the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century A.D.

The manuscript presents a list of the ten *anuśayas*, propensities that bind one to the three types of existence, *kāmadhātu* (desire-realm), *rūpadhātu* (form-realm), and *arūpadhātu* (formless-realm). The *Śāriputra-Abhidharma* presents a similar list, but refers to them as *saṃyojana* (fetters). The two texts are also different in other respects. They might possibly have the same origin, but be two versions belonging to different sects, the Chinese being a Dharmaguptaka text, while the sectarian affiliation of the present manuscript is uncertain. If all the fragments here presented do indeed occur in the context of the presentation of the anuśayas, this would mean that this is a unique list: (1) *dṛṣṭi*, (2) *vicikitsā*, (3) *śīlavratarāga*, (4) *kāmarāga*, (5) *pratigha*, (6) *rūparāga*, (7) *avidya*, (8) *bhavarāga*, (9) *dānarāga*, and (10) *māna*.

Translation of a Possible Chinese Parallel[1]

Of the ten saṃyojana, how many belong to the kāmadhātu, how many belong to the rūpadhātu, and how many belong to the ārūpyadhātu? Two of them belong to the kāmadhātu, one of them belongs to the rūpadhātu, and one of them belongs to the ārūpyadhātu. One of them is divided into two, belonging to both the kāmadhātu and the rūpadhātu. Five of them are divided into three, belonging to both the kāmadhātu, the rūpadhātu, and the ārūpyadhātu. What are the two that belong to the kāmadhātu? Kāmarāga and pratigha belong to the kāmadhātu. What is the one that belongs to the rūpadhātu? Rūparāga belongs to the rūpadhātu. What is the one that belongs to the ārūpyadhātu? Ārūpyarāga belongs to the ārūpyadhātu. What is the one divided into two, belonging to both the kāmadhātu and the rūpadhātu? Śīlavratarāga is the one divided into two, belonging to both the kāmadhātu and the rūpadhātu. What are the five that are divided into three, belonging to both the kāmadhātu, the rūpadhātu, and the ārūpyadhātu? Dṛṣṭi, vicikitsā, avidyā, māna, and auddhatya are the five that are divided into three, belonging to both the

1 BMSC vol. II, 242-244; bold marks correspondence between fragments and Chinese parallel; italics marks divergence.



Transliteration, folio 160, recto

1 tupa .yy. pannā k[a] + [ār]. pyadhā[tupar]yy. [pa] + + + + /// +
2 śīlavratarāgo kāmarāgo pratighaṃ avidyā .. + + + + /// + ryyā
3 tuparyyāpannā ◊ dṛṣṭi vicikitsā bhavarāgo a[vid]y. .. .. /// + an
4 hātav[y]ā pañcanāṃ bhaṃgo dvikoṭīko siyānti + + r.. .. /// [ta]

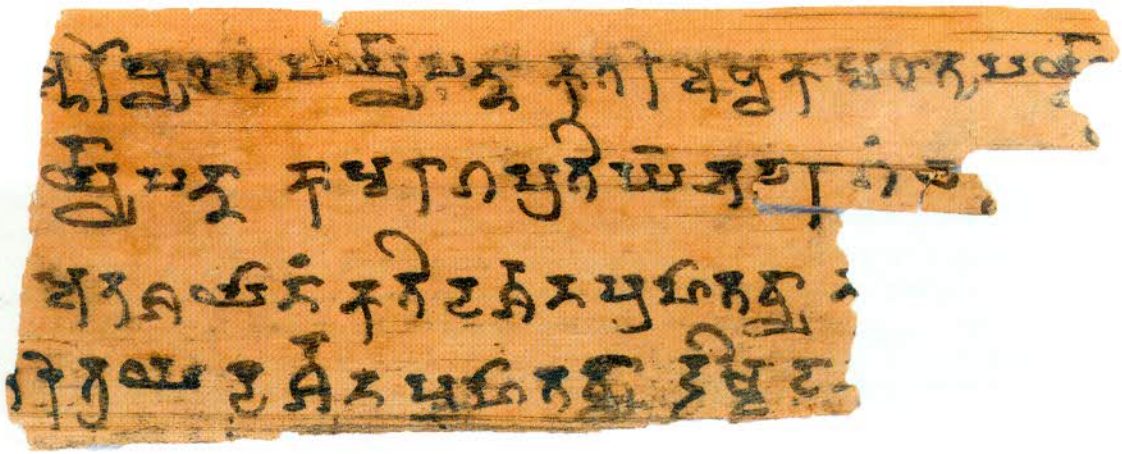
kāmadhātu, the rūpadhātu, and the ārūpyadhātu.

How many of the ten saṃyojana belong to the kāmadhātu? **Eight (aṣṭa)** excluding rūparāga and ārūpyarāga. *How many of the ten saṃyojana* **belong to (paryāpanna)** *the rūpadhātu? Seven excluding* **kāmarāga, pratigha, and** ārūpya**rāga. How many** *of the ten saṃyojana* **belong to** the ārūpyadhātu? *Six, namely* **dṛṣṭi, vicikitsā**, ārūpya**rāga, avidyā**, māna, and auddhatya.

Of the **saṃyojana** that belong to the kāmadhātu, **how many (kati) are darśanaprahātavya**, how many are bhāvanaprahātavya? Three of them are darśanapra**hātavya. Five of them (pañca) are divided into two (bhaṃgo dvikoṭīko)**, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya. **Which are (katare) the three (traya) that are darśanaprahātavya? Dṛṣṭi**, vicikitsā and **śīlavratarāga** are the three that are darśanaprahātavya. **Which are the five (pañca)** that are divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and **bhāvanaprahātavya**? Kāmarāga, pratigha, avidyā, māna, and auddhatya are the five that are divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya.

Of the eight (aṣṭa) saṃyojana that belong to the kāmadhātu (kāmadhātuparyāpanna), how many of them are darśanaprahātavya? All of them are darśanaprahātavya. How many of them are bhāvanaprahātavya? **Excluding dṛṣṭi**, vicikitsā, and śīlavratarāga, **five of them (pañca)** are bhāvanaprahātavya.

Of the seven (sapta) saṃyojana that belong to the rūpadhātu (rūpadhātuparyāpanna), how many of them are darśanaprahātavya, how many of them are bhāvanaprahātavya? Three of them are darśanaprahātavya. Four of them (cature) are



ā]ropyadhātuparyyāpannā ◊ katare aṣṭa kāmadhātupary[y]ā ///
annā ◊ kāmarāga pratighaṃ bha[varāga]ṃ [ca] .. + .. ///
śayānāṃ kati darśanaprahātavyā ◊ .. + + + + + ///
e traya darśanaprahātavyā dṛṣṭi dā .. + + + + + ///

divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya. Which are the three that are darśanaprahātavya? The three that are darśanaprahātavya are **dṛṣṭi, vicikitsā, and śīlavratarāgo**. Which are the four that are divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya? Rūparāga, avidyā, māna, and auddhatya are the four that are divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya.

Of the seven saṃyojana that belong to the rūpadhātu, how many of them are darśanaprahātavya? All of them are darśanaprahātavya. How many of them are bhāvanaprahātavya? Excluding dṛṣṭi, vicikitsā, and śīlavratarāga, four of them are bhāvanaprahātavya.

Of the six saṃyojana that belong to the ārūpyadhātu, how many of them are darśanaprahātavya, how many are bhāvanaprahātavya? Two of them are darśanaprahātavya. Four of them are divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya. Which are the two that are darśanaprahātavya? The two that are darśanaprahātavya are dṛṣṭi and vicikitsā. Which are the four that are divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya? Ārūpyarāga, avidyā, māna, and auddhatya are the four that are divided into two, being both darśanaprahātavya and bhāvanaprahātavya.

Of the six saṃyojana that belong to the ārūpyadhātu, how many of them are darśanaprahātavya? All of them are darśanaprahātavya. How many of them are bhāvanaprahātavya? Four of them are bhāvanaprahātavya, namely ārūpyarāga, avidyā, māna, and auddhatya.

Abhidharma

A Commentary on the Mahāsamājasūtra

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 195-206
Editors: Siglinde Dietz, Olle Qvarnström and Peter Skilling
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 6th century A.D.
Language: Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

The manuscript comments on an unknown version of the *Mahāsamājasūtra*, a text in which the Buddha returns to his ancestral city. Any parallel commentaries have not been identified.

Background

The *Mahāsamājasūtra* is one of the most ancient and popular of early Buddhist texts. It recounts the event when the Buddha returns to his ancestral city to manifest the Great Assembly (*mahāsamāja*), just as previous Buddhas had done, to display happiness and sovereignty surpassing that of a *cakravartin*, and to display gratitude. The gods of the age flock en masse to pay homage to the Buddha and the Saṅgha, after which they witness an unsuccessful assault by Māra and his army. The text is found in the Long Collections (Dīghanikāya and Dīrghāgma), and is to this day recited as a text for protection (*paritta*) in the Theravāda Saṃgha.

The Manuscript

The fragment is part of an unknown commentary on the *Mahāsamājasūtra*, as no parallel texts can be located. The fragment opens with some verses of a recension of the sūtra itself, whereupon some didactic questions about the text are posed: "Why are there precisely five hundred arhats, no more no less?", "Why did it occur to [the Brahmakāyika gods], 'This Blessed One [is staying] in Kapilavastu of the Śākyas'?", etc. These are then seemingly answered.

The preserved manuscript is a single fragment made of palm leaf. It is written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, and compared with other manuscripts written in this script it can perhaps be dated to the sixth century A.D. The language is Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit. It appears that the leaf has been re-used, and that the first three lines of the verso are written over an erased text.

Translation[1]

(r1) ... travelled (?) ... up to:
Let us listen to what happened.

The Abṛha gods have come
So also the Atapas have arrived
The Sudṛśas and Sudarśanas as well
And the Akaniṣṭhas have arrived.

They filled the six directions
One ...

(r2) ... Rejoicing they approached
The gathering of monks in the forest.

Indeed, let us see the Sambuddha
Pure like the sun in the sky.
The Hero is expounding the Dharma,
Let us listen to what happened.

Māra approached these.
...

(r3) ... The Teacher announced
To the Auditors devoted to his teaching:

"Māra's forces have come–
Of these be well aware, O monks."
Those monks were energetic
Those sons of the Victorious One

They all have attained (a state, in which they cannot) be agitated.
...

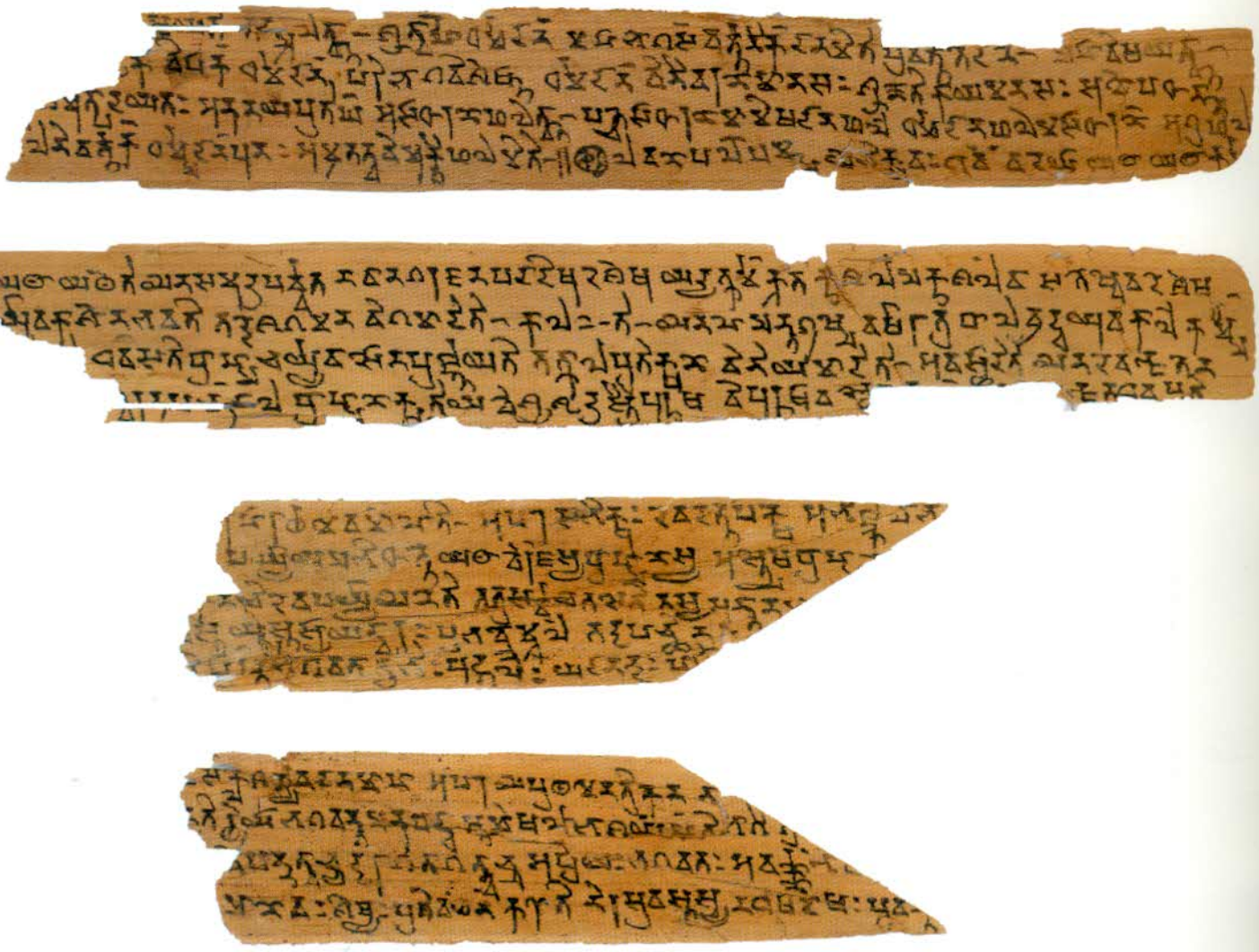
(r4) ... although (the Blessed One) was liberated from the noose of suffering, affection, attachment, and aversion, in the ancestral city (he) experienced the splendour of the Great Assembly in full. Why "exactly five hundred arhats," no more and no less? "Ten" ... (r5) ... these "Brahmakāyikā" [gods]. Why did it "occur to them, 'This Blessed One [is staying] in the Śākyan's Kapilavastu'", etc.? Why did "each of them praise [the Blessed One] in verse"? In order to announce the glory of the Great Assembly. Who ...? (r6) ... they are bound to the "control of the sense-faculties." They are constantly dwelling (in this state) (scil. *indriyagupti*). Herein the reason should be given: "Having broken," the *kīla* etc. should be mentioned. How "tamed"? What is the meaning of "young elephants"? Why the name(s) of the god(s) ... ? (r7) Indra, the Moon, Dhanada, Vyāḍa, Asuras, the Sun, the planets (*grahas*), with devotion, thirsting for the gift of the taste of Dharma, gave up their desired pleasures. Where the gods etc. dwelling in the ten world systems have arrived, this I shall tell. (v1) ... the fruitfulness of his vow and of [his] exertion for the sake of the purification of [his] mother … the Blessed One, in the ancestral city, experienced the perfection of the Great Assembly. How? It is said: When he was a Bodhisattva [he saw the four sights:] an aged person, a sick person, a corpse [and an ascetic] ... (v2) ... by him, who felt disgust generated by the notion of a charnel-ground when gazing upon [the sleeping harem], who was accompanied by a single attendant and single horse, who felt the glorious rising of the going forth, which was effected by the retinue of deities. Not long after he had left the city, the city gods ordained ... (v3) ... in order to establish (*niyātanā*°) the resolve (of a bodhisattva) the so-called display of the Great Assembly may take place in the ancestral city. This is the occurrence–or alternatively, when the bodhisattva was born, having heard from Asita such interpretations (of the signs): "He will be a Cakravartin King or (a Buddha?)." (v4) ... They, owing to the Bodhisattva's departure their aspirations were unfulfilled, and as if mounted on steeds with impaired eyesight, they set out on the wrong road and became sunk in despair and grief-stricken. (v5) ... Thus showing them happiness and sovereignty far surpassing that of a Cakravartin, the Blessed One removed that anxiety through the display of the Great Assembly ... [showing that this was no] inferior sovereignty ... (v6) ... (in the ancestral city) displayed the Great Assembly. As a result of the Bodhisattva's departure Śākyavardhana and other local deities of Kapilapura were reproached by the Śākyas [saying] 'What is the point of worshipping them, by whom the prince ...?' (v7) ... in the ancestral city displayed the Great Assembly. It was customary for former Buddhas as well to display the Great Assembly in their ancestral city in order to show gratitude, or (in order to) ... the residents of the ancestral city ...

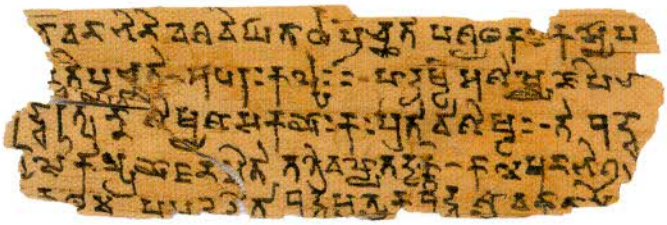
1 BMSC vol. III, 201-206.

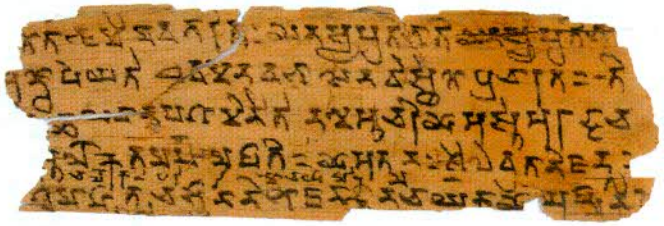
Abhidharma

Fragments of an Early Commentary

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 249-254
Editors: Lambert Schmithausen, Jens Braarvig and Lore Sander
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Kuṣāṇa Brāhmi
Date: 2nd century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit







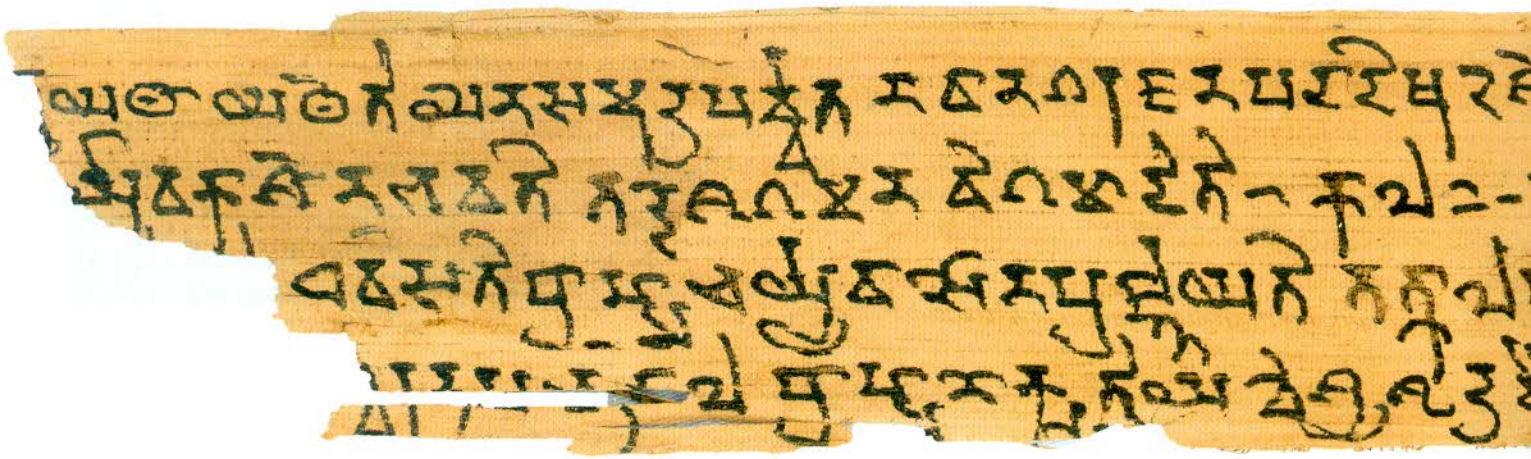
The manuscript comments on various partly identified sūtra sections, but only the *Lavaṇapalopama(-sūtra)* has been identified with certainty. The manuscript was probably written sometime in the second century A.D.

Background

No parallel to this commentary has been found, and it has been very difficult to identify the sections upon which it comments. Some references have however been identified with certainty, and for one section the interpretation is also fairly certain. This is a comment on the *Lavaṇapalopama(-sūtra)*, "The (Sermon of the) Simile of the Ounce of Salt", preserved in the Chinese Madhyāgama (T 26, 433a14-17), and corresponding to a section in the Pāli Aṅguttaranikāya (AN III 99). In this section the Buddha discusses karmic maturation in relation to place (*deśa*), time (*kāla*), and state (*avasthā*). Another reference is to an instance, also in the Aṅguttaranikāya (AN IV 173), where the Brahmin Verañja reproaches the Buddha for not greeting old Brahmins and ascetics respectfully. Some other topics are also discussed, for instance the two types of gifts, worldly and religious, and the qualities of these.

The Manuscript

The manuscript consists of five fragments belonging to five different folios. The material is palm leaf, and the script is a Brāhmi dating to the Kuṣāṇa period, a characteristic of which is the square form of the characters. The manuscript was probably written during the time of the Kuṣāṇa kings Kaniṣka or Huviṣka, sometime in the second century A.D. The language is Sanskrit.



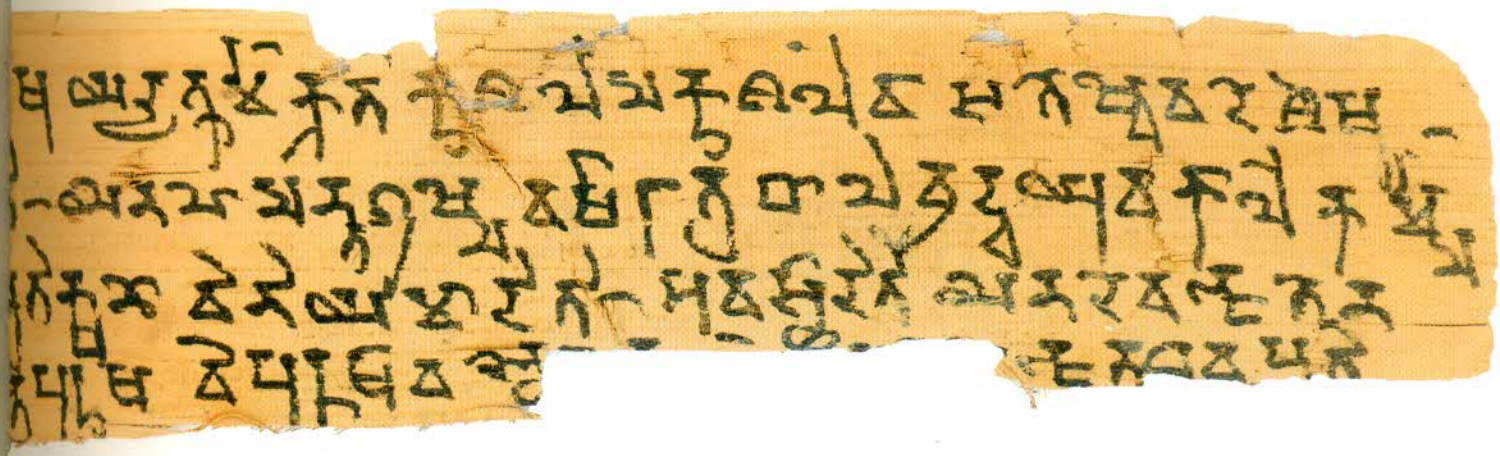
Transliteration, folio 1, verso

1 /// .. yathā yatheti yena samudraparvvatanavānagarajanapadādiṣu de
2 /// ry[y]āvakāśo na bhavati ◊ taddeśagamanavigamād iti • kāla iti • y
3 /// + + + .i evaṃ sati brāhmacaryyavāso na prajñāyati tatkālapratikṣa
4 /// + + + + va[ranṛ]pacaṃḍālabrāhmaṇakṣat[r]iyavaiśyaśudrastrīpuru

Translation[1]

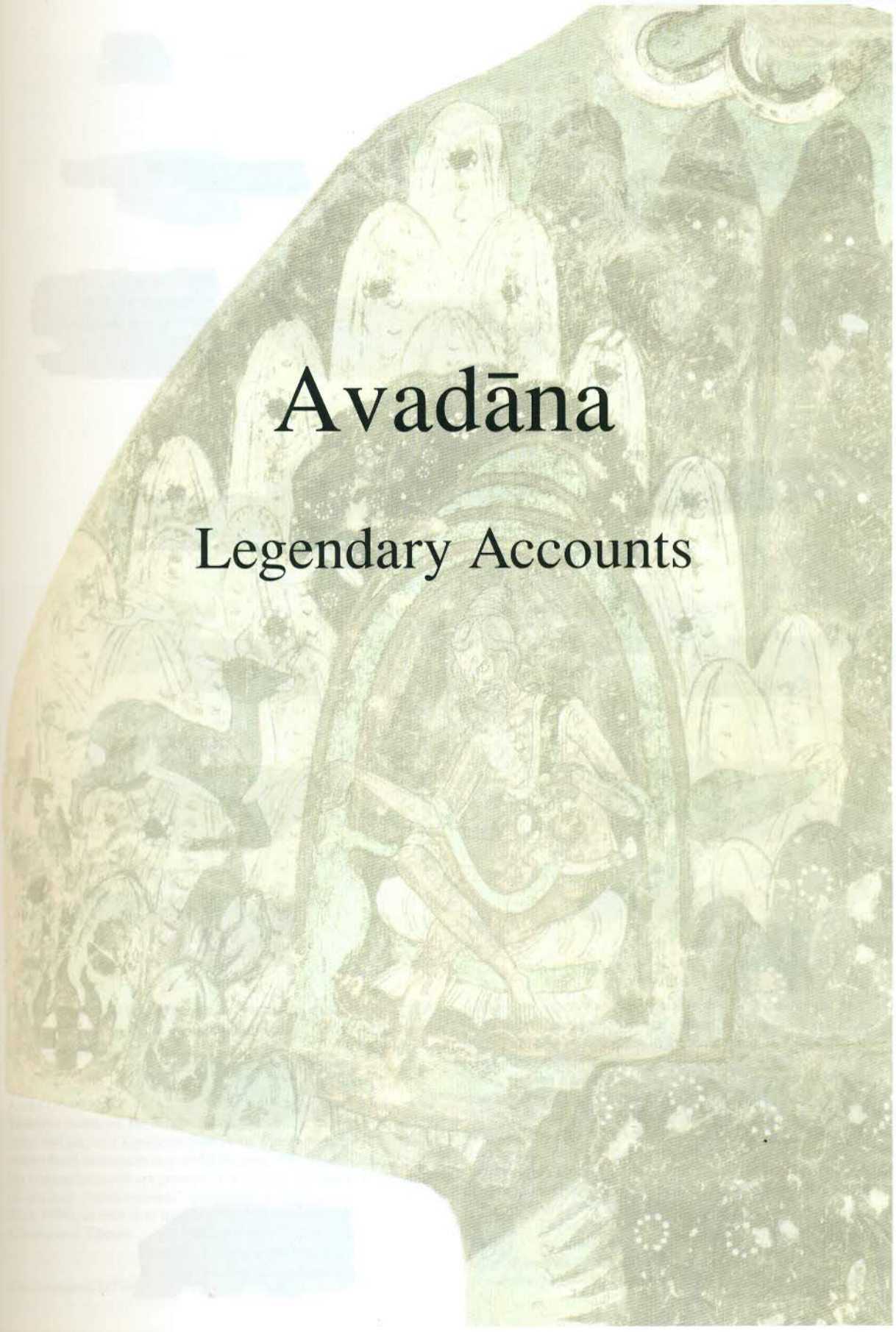
The '[Sermon of the] Simile of the Ounce of Salt': "If, o monks, somebody should say thus: 'However one performs a [karmic] action, in just the same way one experiences it[s result],' then no practising of religious life would be possible, [and hence] there would be no chance for making an end to suffering." 'However (*yathā yathā*)': [1. Place:] If by somebody a certain action—a wholesome one or an unwholesome one—was performed at [a certain place as,] e.g., the ocean, a mountain, a forest (?), a town or a region, he would [according to that theory have to] experience [its result] in precisely these places; in this case,

1 BMSC vol. II, 253; a translation of the comment on the *Sermon of the Simile of the Ounce of Salt* found in folio 1rz-v4.



ṣu yad yat karmaṃ kṛta[ṃ] kuśalam akuśalaṃ vā ◊ sa teṣv eva deśeṣu
na hemantagṛṣme varṣā rātrabālavṛddhayuvakāle karmmaṃ
aviniyamād iti • avasthād iti yena devabhūtena
avipuruṣāvasthe .. .. .. ṃ + .. + + bhūta eva p[ra]ti

there would be no chance for religious life, because he would necessarily have to go to that place. [2.] Time: If by somebody [a certain] action was performed at [a certain] time [as, e.g.,] in winter, in the hot season or in the rainy season, <in daytime or (?)> at night, when he was a child, an adult or a youth, he would [have to] experience [its result] at precisely that time; in this case, there would be no religious life, because he would necessarily have to wait for the [corresponding] time. [3.] State: If by somebody a certain action was performed [in a certain state, e.g.,] as a god or a human being, ... in the state of a ... king or outcaste, brahmin, kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra, woman, man or eunuch (?), he would [have to] experience [its result] in precisely the same [state]; in this case, there would be no chance to practise religious life, ...



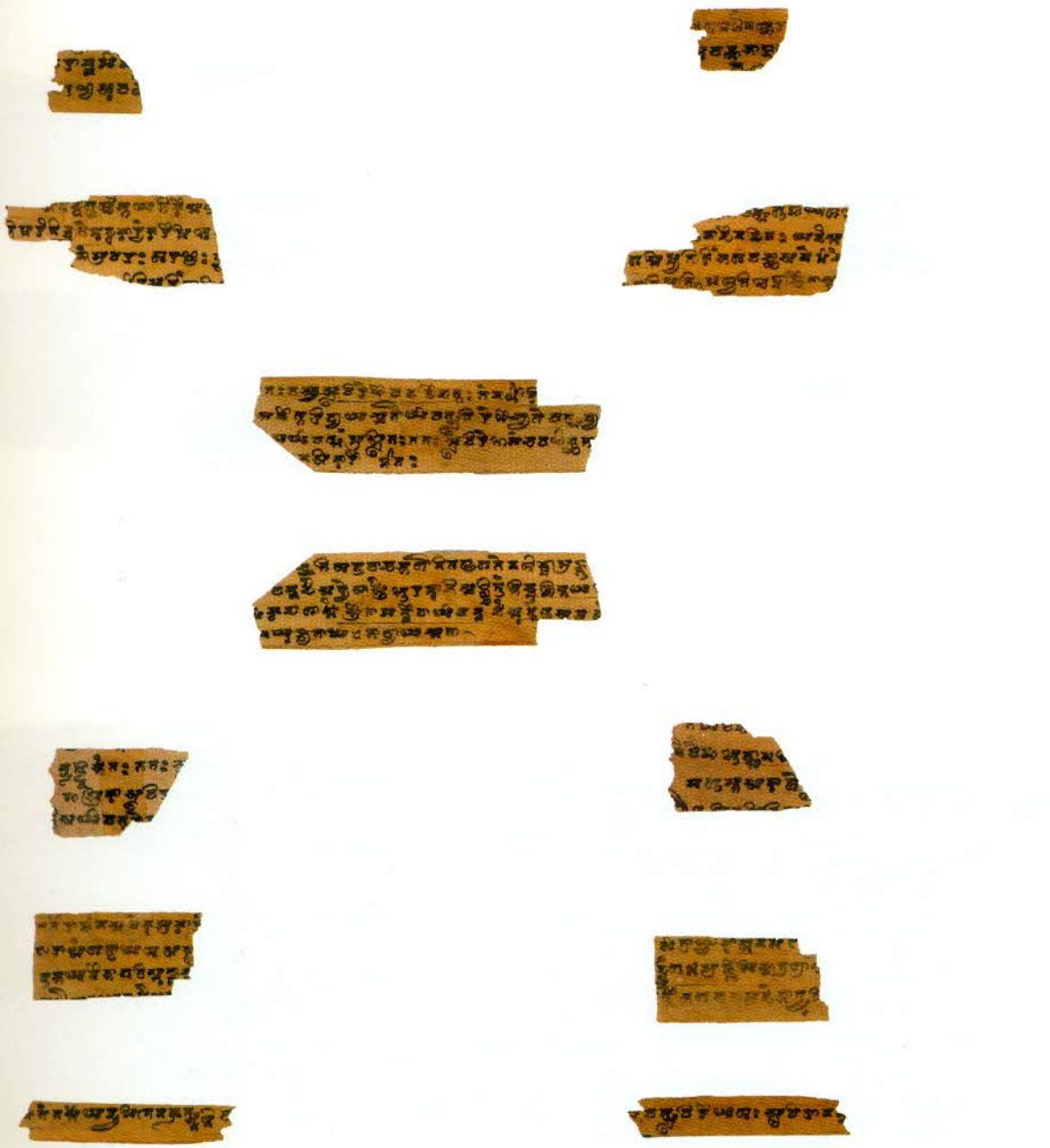
Avadāna

Legendary Accounts

Avadāna

The Aśoka Legend

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. I, 219-231
Editor: Klaus Wille
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 6th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit



The fragments preserve parts of various manuscripts relating to Aśoka, the legendary ancient king who united India and converted to Buddhism.

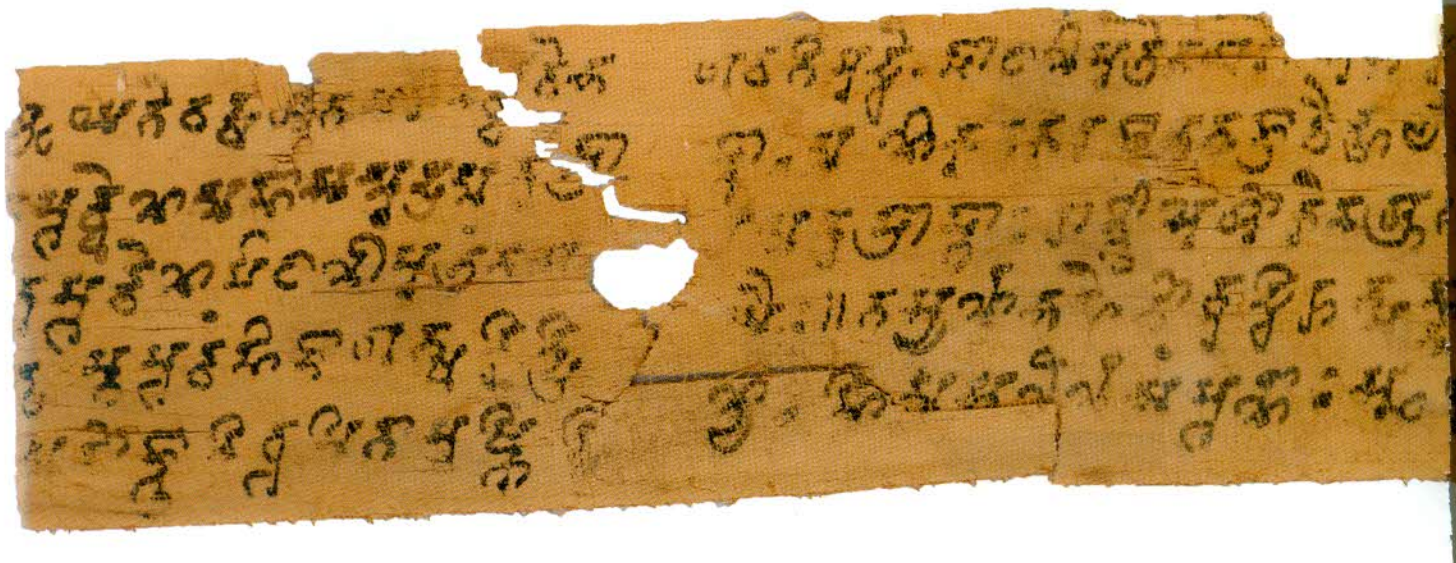
Background

Aśoka (304-232 B.C.) has a place of special importance within most Buddhist traditions. He is seen as the preeminent example of the ideal ruler, and played a significant role in the transformation of Buddhism from a local movement to a world religion. The legends relating to his accomplishments are preserved in the Divyāvadāna, a collection of avadānas ("achievements") preserved in Sanskrit (Cowell and Neil, 1886), as well as in translations of this and other collections in Chinese and Tibetan.

The Manuscripts

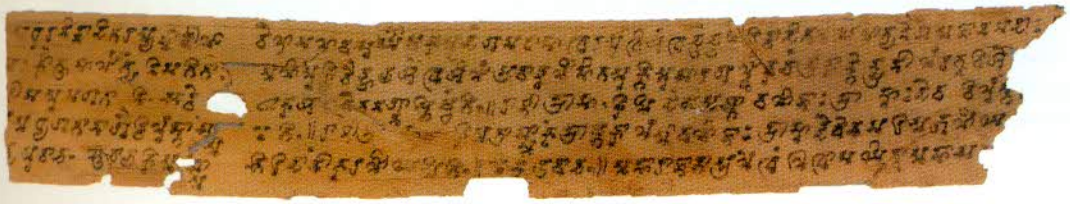
The fragments (47 in total) of these manuscripts in the Schøyen collection preserve sections parallel to those found in the four *avadānas* related to Aśoka in the Sanskrit Divyāvadāna collection: *Pāṃśupradānāvadāna* (fragments 1 and 2), *Kunālāvadāna* (fragments 6-8), *Vītaśokāvadāna* (fragments 4 and 5, and part of 3), and the *Aśokāvadāna* (fragment 9). In addition parallels can be found in the Chinese **Aśokarājāvadāna* (T 2042) and **Aśokarājāsūtra* (T 2043) (fragments 10 and 11), and in the Tibetan *Aśokamukhanāgavinayapariccheda* (fragment 18; cf. Mette, 1985), the last being a fragment that belongs to a different manuscript. Six fragments (12-17) belong to the Aśoka legend, but could not be identified. The remaining 30 fragments have no relation to Aśoka, but may possibly represent parts of a larger collection of avadānas.

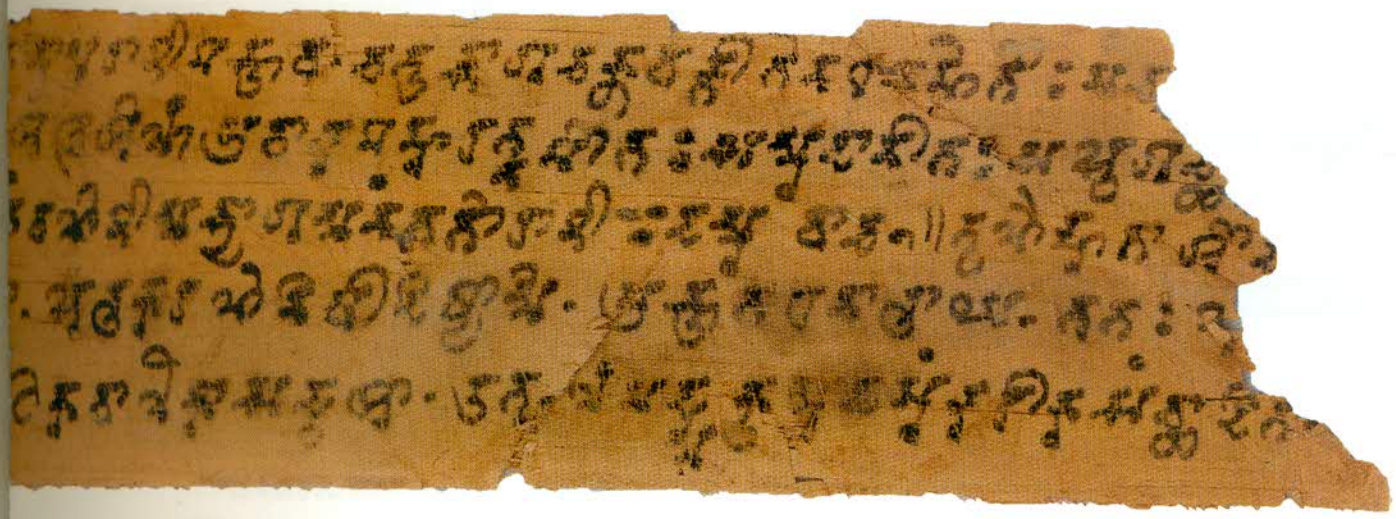
The manuscripts are written in a tiny delicate upright script on very small palm leaves, only 3.5 cm in height. The script is Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I of an ornate character, and can be dated approximately to the sixth century A.D.



Transliteration, folio 18 (*Aśokamukhanāgavinayapariccheda*), recto

1 /// śrūyate varṣaśata[parinir]vṛte bha ○ gavati buddhe • pāṭāliputre [nagare] .. [a]
2 /// (an)pūrvveṇa mahāsamudram a[nu]prā ○ ptā . maṇika[naka]ra[jatava]jravaiḍū
3 /// (a)[nu]pūrveṇa pāṭālīputraṃ na[ga] ○ [ra]m anuprāptāḥ rājñā aśokena śrutaṃ
4 /// (a)[t]ṛptapūrvaṃ hi jagat ṣa[ḍ]indri ○ yaiḥ ‖ ta[s]ya lā[bha]he[t]or buddhir utp
5 ///]man]ojña[v]idhūpitā<ḥ> puṣkiri ○ ṇya . himasalilasaṃpūrṇāḥ sphaṭika[v]ālik



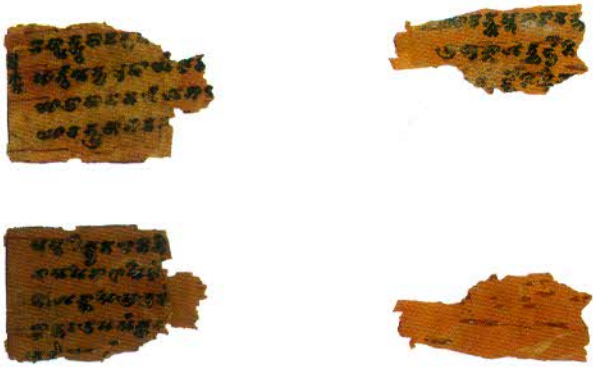


.. ko nāma rājā babhūva • caturbhāgacakkravartī tena dha[na]hetoḥ pa[ṃca] + + ///
ryaśa[ṃ]khaśilāpravāḍabahuratnapotaḥ samudānītaḥ sa āga[c]ch. + ///
vaṇijām abhyāgamanaṃ tato rājā idam uvāca • ‖ tṛṇair hutāśo [d]. ///
nnā • arthakaraṇe niṣīdiṣyāmi • prabhūtadhanārthāya • tataḥ [a] + ///
ā<ḥ> [sadṛ]śā. utpalapadmaku[muda]puṃḍarīkasaṃcchādi[t](ā) .. ///

Avadāna

Jyotiṣkāvadāna

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 287-302
Editor: Stefan Baums
Material: Birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 6th-7th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit



The manuscript preserves the beginning and end of the well known *Jyotiṣkāvadāna*, the story of the life of Jyotiṣka. It provides several improvements to the previously published Sanskrit version.

Background

The story of Jyotiṣka's miraculous fire birth and further career has enjoyed great popularity in the Buddhist tradition, as evidenced by the multitude of literary versions of and references to it, as well as pictorial representations. The story has come down to us as part of two collections, the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayakṣudrakavastu (in Tibetan, Q de-ne, and Chinese, T 1451) and the Divyāvadāna (in Sanskrit, Cowell and Neil, 1886, no. 19), the latter probably extracted from the former.

In the story we hear of a prophecy the Buddha has made about the wife of the householder Subhadra, concerning the fact that she will give birth to a son "who will make the family shine, experience semi-devine happiness, enter my discipline and through the abandoning of all impurities realise arhatship." The only problem is that she has died and been carried off to the funeral ground. A crowd gathers to witness the miracle of Jyotiṣka emerging from his mother's womb after she has been cremated. He, indeed, goes on to excel in worldly affairs, and then becomes a disciple of the Buddha.

The Manuscript

The ten fragments belong to three different folios, numbers 222, 223 and 230, preserving the beginning and end of the story. The material is birch bark, and the script is Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, placing it in the sixth-seventh century A.D. The leaves are approximately 41 cm wide and 6,2 cm high. The manuscript provides us with several improvements to the Diviyāvadāna text.

Translation of the Reconstructed Text[1]

Two young boys, a brahman boy and a kṣatriya boy, went outside Rājagṛha and played. Of the two, the kṣatriya boy was immersed in the faith, but not so the brahman boy. The brahman boy said to the kṣatriya boy: "Friend, the Lord has prophesied to the wife of the householder Subhadra: 'She will give birth to a son, he will make the family shine, experience semi-divine happiness, enter my discipline and through the abandoning of all impurities realise arhatship.' And she has died, passed away, and been carried down to the Śītavana funeral ground. But what is said by the Lord may not be false!" The kṣatriya boy spoke a verse:

"The sky with moon and stars may come falling down,
the earth with rock and mountains may rise to the sky,
the water of the great oceans may dry up,
but the great sages would not speak lies."

The brahman boy said: "Friend, if that is so, let's go to the Śītavana funeral ground. Let's go, friend, let's see." They set out together. And the Lord left Rājagṛha. The kṣatriya boy saw the Lord from far away, and seeing him spoke another verse:

"Since this calm saint free from passion
walks surrounded by a crowd of people
doubtless, crushing the teachers of rival groups,
he will raise the highest roar of the king of the beasts.

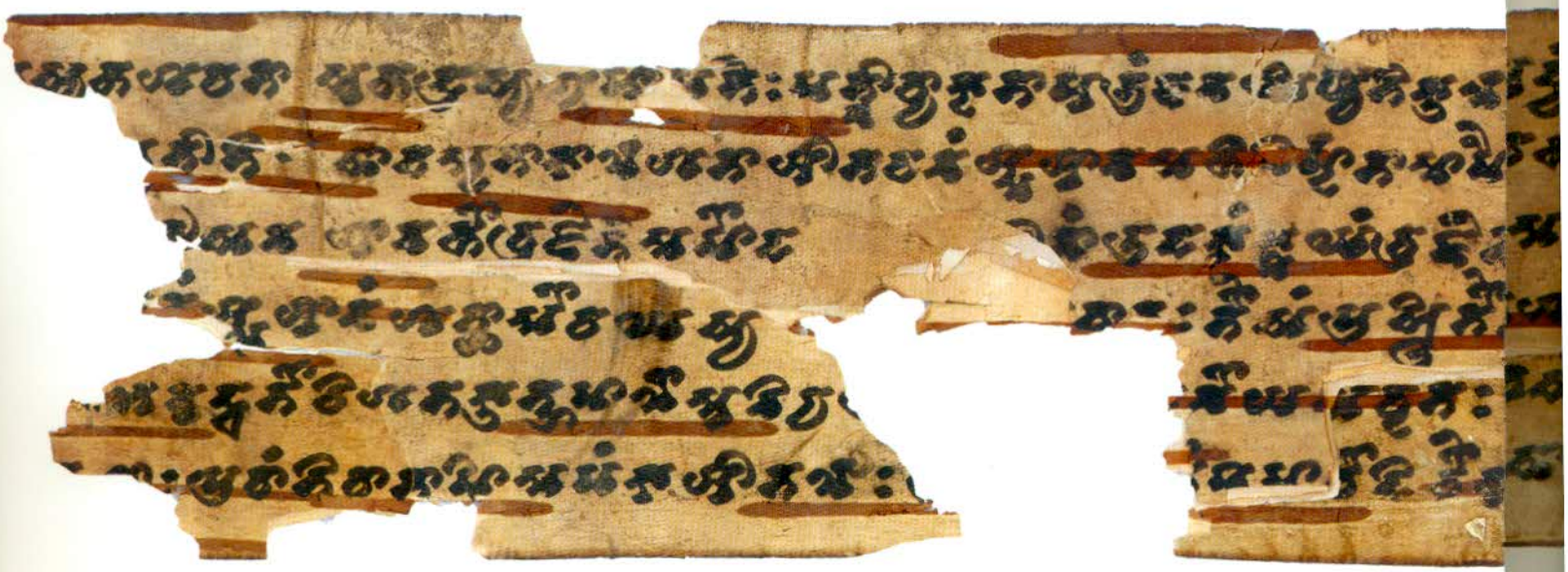
Since these restless winds facing the Śītavana
blow forth with the coolness of snow
many heaven-dwellers must be coming forth
to watch the miracle of the Śākya sage."

King Bimbisāra heard: "The Lord has prophesied to the wife of the householder Subhadra: 'She will give birth to a son, he will make the family shine, experience semi-divine happiness, enter my discipline and through the abandoning of all impurities realise arhatship.' And she has died, passed away, and been carried down to the Śītavana funeral ground. And the Lord with the community of disciples has set out for the Śītavana funeral ground." On hearing this the following occurred to him: "The Lord does not without reason go to the Śītavana funeral ground. Surely the Lord, coming to the wife of the householder Subhadra, will wish to perform a great act of conversion. Let's see." And surrounded by his household of women, the princes and ministers, city and countryside dwellers, he began leaving Rājagṛha. The kṣatriya boy saw the King of Magadha, Śreṇya Bimbisāra, from far away, and seeing him spoke another verse:

"Since this Śreṇya, ruler of Magadha,
has come forth from Rājagṛha together with his friends
the certainty arises in my heart:
the uplift of many people is about to happen."

When the assemblage of people saw the Lord, they made an opening. The Lord entered the middle of the great crowd with a

1 BMSC vol. II, 297-299; the reconstruction is based on the version found in the Divyāvadāna; the manuscript preserves only the beginning and end of the story.

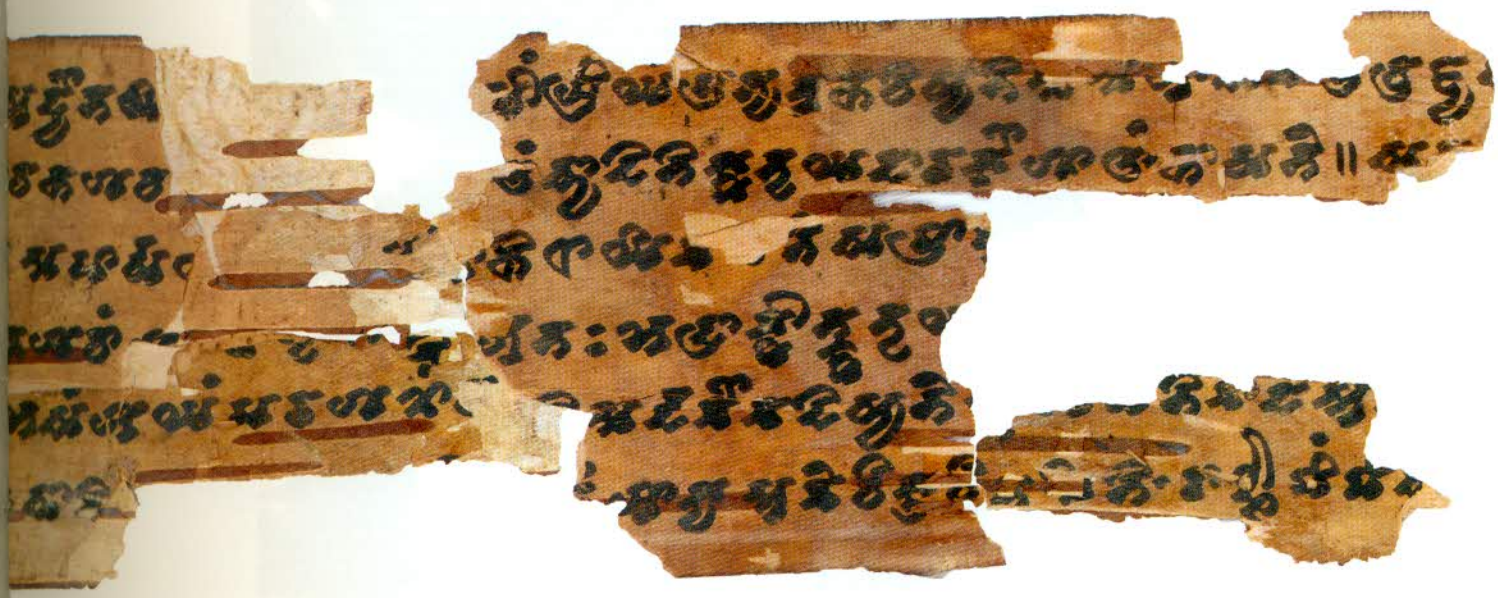


Folio (222), recto

smile on his face. When the Nirgranthas saw the Lord with a smile on his face, they reflected: "Judging from how the mendicant Gautama entered the middle of the great crowd with a smile on his face, surely this being has not passed away." They said to the householder Subhadra: "Householder, surely this ill-fated being has not passed away." He said: "Good man, if that is so, what is to be done here?" They said: "Householder, we have undertaken vows, you'll have to find out yourself." He placed his wife on the funeral pyre and began burning her. Her whole body was burned except for the area around the womb. Then this womb burst open, a lotus appeared, and in its upper lotus protuberance there sat a boy, beautiful, handsome, and graceful. Seeing him many hundreds of thousands of living beings were struck by utter amazement. The Nirgranthas got humbled in their pride, arrogance, and dignity. Then the Lord addressed the householder Subhadra: "Householder, take the boy!" He began looking at the Nirgranthas' faces. They said: "Householder, if you enter this blazing pyre, you will completely and totally cease to exist." He did not take him. Then the Lord addressed Jīvaka Kumārabhr ya: "Take the boy, Jīvaka!" He reflected: "It is a complete impossibility that the Lord will charge me with the impossible. I'll take him." Without hesitation he plunged into the funeral pyre and took him.

> As he plunged into the pyre at the Jina's command
> and took the boy lying in the flames,
> from the great power of the Jina the fire
> in an instant became cold as snow.

Then the Lord said this to Jīvaka Kumārabhṛta: "Jīvaka, aren't you hurt or injured?" He said: "I was born in a royal family, master, and have grown up in a royal family, but do not know such a coolness as that of the funeral pyre controlled by the Lord, not even of Gośīrṣa sandal paste." Then the Lord addressed the householder Subhadra: "Now take the boy, householder!" Afflicted by false views, he however did not go near, but it was the Nirgranthas he looked to. They said: "Householder, this boy



is extremely ill-fated, because he has not been burned by the all-consuming fire. What more do you need? If you let him enter your house in this way, inevitably your house becomes heirless and you lose your life." There's no love like self-love. Therefore he did not take him. Then the Lord addressed King Bimbisāra: "Take the boy, great king!" He excitedly stretched out his hands and took him. Then looking all around he said: "Lord, what shall be this boy's name?" The Lord said: "Great king, because this boy has been obtained from the middle of fire, therefore the boy shall be called 'Jyotiṣka'." He was given the name 'Jyotiṣka.'

...

... And Jyotiṣka went to Ajātaśatru's house. The wealth disappeared from that house and went wherever Jyotiṣka did. In this way it disappeared and reappeared as many as seven times. Ajātaśatru reflected: "I can't carry off Jyotiṣka's jewels this way either. I'll use another method." He instructed rogues: "Go carry off the jewels from Jyotiṣka's house." They began climbing by means of ropes and hooks. They were seen by one from the womens' quarters who had gone to the top of the palace. She raised a cry of "Rogues, rogues!" and Jyotiṣka heard it. Out of his heart he uttered the words: "Stop, rogues!" All of them stopped still, exactly where they had climbed up, until night turned into morning. A great crowd of people saw it. They said: "Sirs, this evil king has deprived his father, the righteous dharma king, of his life. Now he also robs houses. Why should we put up with this? Ajātaśatru sent Jyotiṣka a messenger: "Release them! This is ill-treatment of me." Out of his heart Jyotiṣka uttered the words: "Go, rogues!" They went. Jyotiṣka reflected: "He who indeed has deprived his father, the righteous dharma king, of his life, will not kill me. Why is that? It has by all means been prophesied to me by the Lord: 'He will enter my discipline and through the abandoning of all impurities realise arhatship.' Let's go and enter the ascetic life." With that he gave his wealth of all sorts to the miserable, the helpless, and the poor. The penniless were made wealthy. Then the householder Jyotiṣka said farewell to his friends, relatives, and family and went where the Lord was. Having gone there, he did homage to the Lord's feet with his head and sat down on one side. Having sat down on one side, the householder Jyotiṣka said this to the Lord: "May I, master, obtain entry in the well-taught dharma and vinaya, ordination, and the life of a monk. May I live the religious life at the Lord's side."

Avadāna

Avadānaśataka

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 207-244
Editor: Mitsuyo Demoto
Material: Birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 6th century A.D.
Lanugage: Sanskrit, with some Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

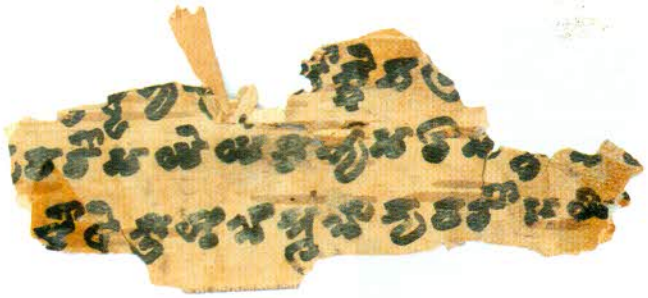
The *Avadānaśataka* contains legends primarily related to the Buddha and the emperor Aśoka. The present manuscripts are probably the earliest versions yet discovered.

Background

Avadāna is a type of Buddhist literature that explains the present with reference to worthy deeds in the past. The *Avadānaśataka*, "A Hundred Noble Deeds", is an anthology of such legends primarily concerning the Buddha and the emperor Aśoka. The collection has been preserved in Sanskrit manuscripts from Nepal (Speyer, 1902-9), as well as in Tibetan and Chinese translation. The present manuscript is probably the earliest version yet discovered.

The Manuscripts

The 37 fragments belong to ten folios, nine of which belong to the same manuscript. The material is birch bark, and the script is Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, which probably places the manuscript in the sixth century A.D., or somewhat later. The first manuscript preserves fragments of 16 *avadānas*: nos. 23) *Cakram*, 34) *Śibhiḥ*, 35) *Surūpaḥ*, 37) *Śaśaḥ*, 38) *Dharmagaveṣī*, 39) *Anāthapiṇḍadaḥ*, 40) *Subhadraḥ*, 47) *Jātyandhā*, 48) *Sreṣṭhī*, 52) *Candraḥ*, 53) *Sālaḥ*, 62) *Sugandhiḥ*, 63) *Vapuṣmān*, and 87) *Śobhitaḥ*. The second manuscript preserves part of avadāna no. 51) *Kṛṣṇasarpaḥ*. The latter tells the story of a poisonous snake which has developed faith in the Buddha and which, after its death and rebirth as a deva, adorned with many ornaments, visits the Buddha in order to thank him for his favour.



Transliteration, folio 1 (*avadāna* no. 23, *Cakram*), recto

1 /// + + + + + + + + + + + + + + /// + + + + [ca]kraṃ pradāsyāmīti tatas tasya svāṃ

2 /// + + + + + + + + + + + + + + /// + + .. [p]r.[s]th.tā atrāṃtare nāsti kiṃcid buddh

3 /// + + + + + + + + + + + + + + /// + + + [śy]inā vihāriṇā[ṃ] tṛdamatha vastukuśal

4 /// + + + + + + + + + + + (○) /// + + + + + + [ma]tikrā.̇ tānāṃ • ṣaḍaṃgasamanvā

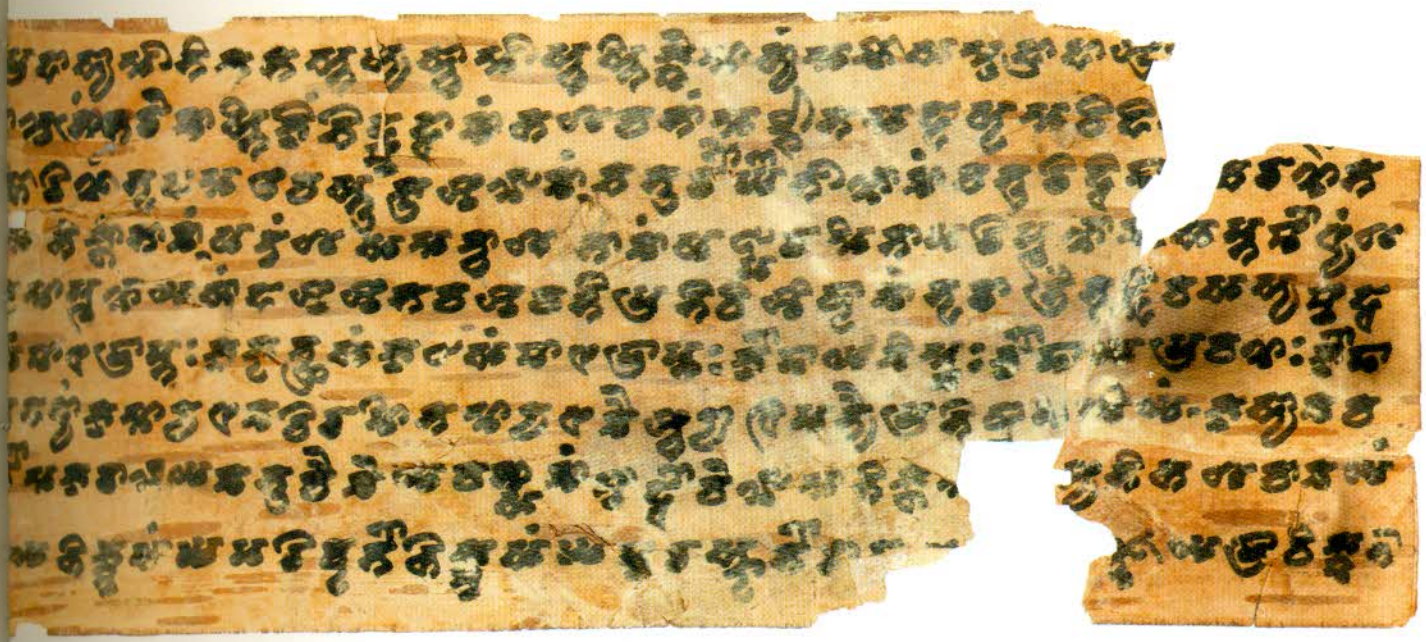
5 /// + + + + + + + + + + + (○) /// + + + + + dik[s]amāpūrṇayasāṃ daśaśatavaśavar

6 /// + + + + + + + + + + + (○) /// + + + + kaḥ saṃbādhaprāptaḥ ka kṛcchrasaṃka

7 /// + .[u] .dhṛ[t]ya .. + [mo]kṣe ca [p]r. + + + + /// + .[dh]. .. m anupradadyāṃ kam

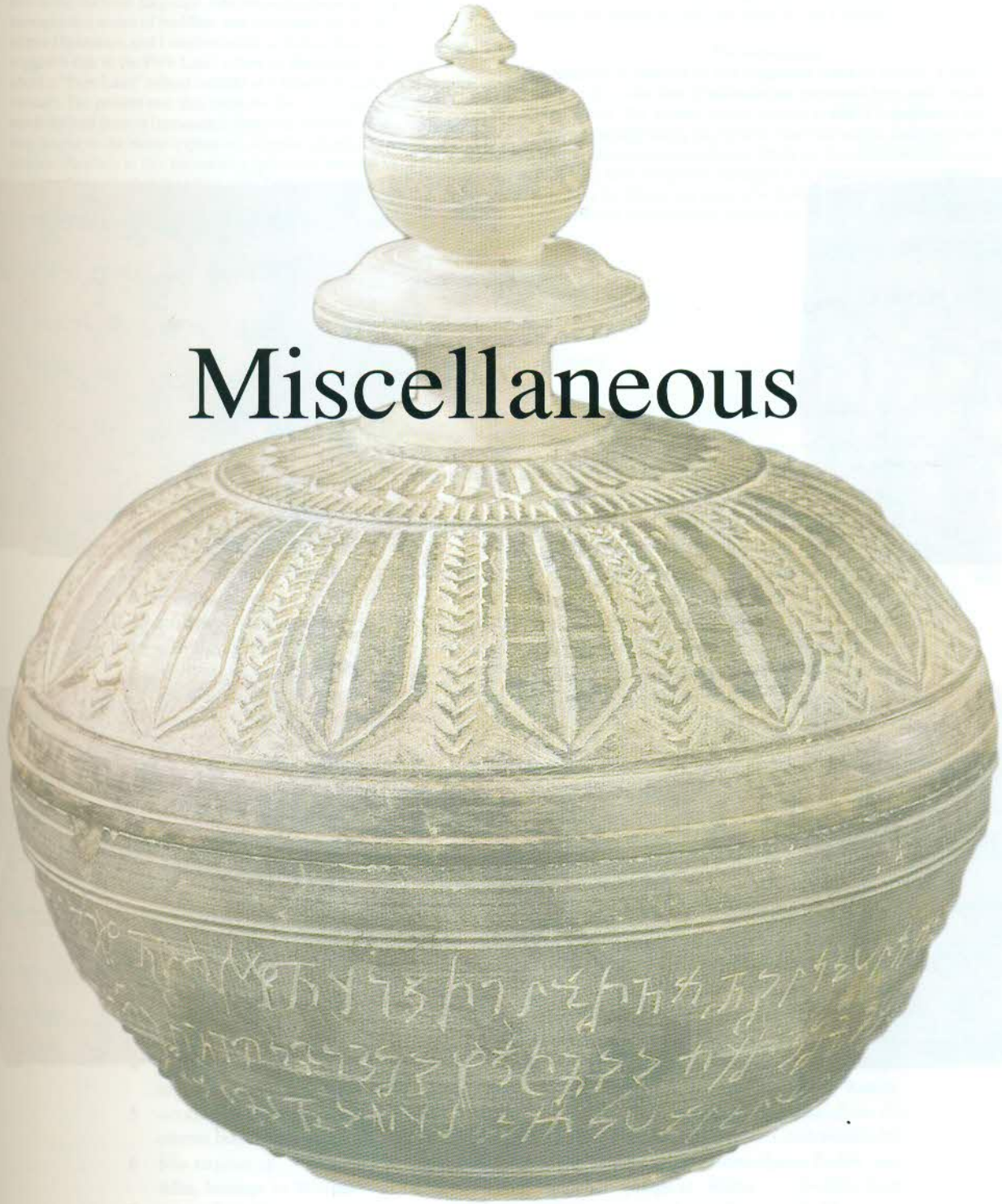
8 /// .[y]. varopayeyaṃ kasya pari[pa] .v. [n]. .. /// + d v[e]lāṃ sāgaro makarālaya

9 /// + bodhe kuśalamūlāny avaropayi + /// tracīvaram ādāya bhikṣusaṃghaparivṛt



ī svastikṣemābhyāṃ mahāsamudrād ā[śu] .. + + + +
nāṃ bhagavatāṃm ajñātam adṛṣṭam avidi .. + + .[ñ]. +
nāṃ • caturaughotīrṇānāṃ caturiddhi[pā] + caraṇata
atānāṃ ṣa pāramitāparipūrṇā[n]. saptabodhyaṃga
iprativiśiṣṭānāṃ tṛ rātre tṛ ddivasasya buddha
saṃbādhaprāptaḥ ko pāyanimnaḥ ko pāyapravaṇaḥ ko pā
āryadhanavirahitam āryadhanaiśvaryādhipatyai pratiṣ[h]āpa[ye]yaṃ • kasyānava
a tu vaineyavatsānāṃ buddho velām atikra[m]. + + [ś]yati bhagavān ayaṃ
bhikṣusaṃghapuraskṛto [rā] .. .. + + [ṇḍ]āya prāvikṣat*

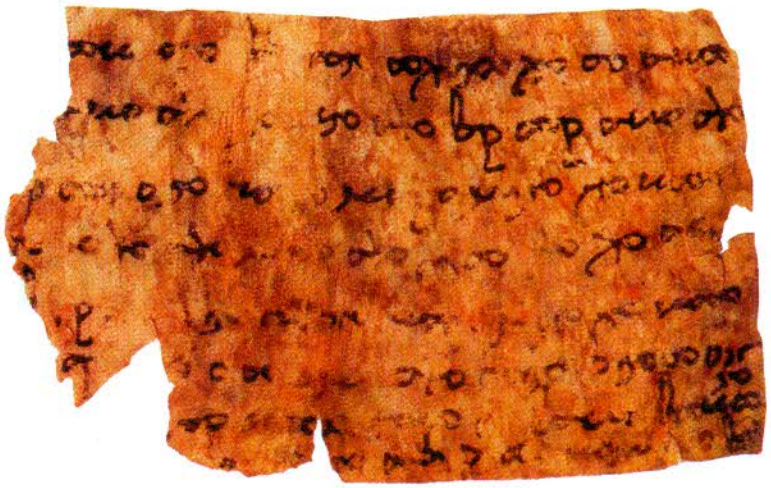
Miscellaneous



Miscellaneous

A Bactrian Buddhist Manuscript

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. I, 275-277
Editor: Nicholas Sims-Williams
Material: Leather
Script: Graeco-Bactrian cursive
Date: 5th century A.D.
Language: Bactrian



As one of only two preserved Buddhist texts written in the Bactrian language, this manuscript is unique both from the fact that it is written in the Graeco-Bactrian script, as well as being made from leather.

Background

Only two Buddhist texts (including this one) have so far been identified in the Bactrian language. The two are similar in containing homages to a series of buddhas and bodhisattvas, including amongst others Dīpaṃkara and Lokeśvararāja, a feature that has been taken to suggest a link to the Pure Land school of Buddhism (although talking about a "Pure Land" school outside of Chinese Buddhism is controversial). The present text also includes the expressed wish that the merit derived from it (apparently from the copying of the text itself) may accrue to the writer's relatives, whether living, departed, or still unborn. Parallels to this formulaic expression are also to be found in the colophons of other Buddhist texts from Central Asia.

The present manuscript is a good illustration of the significant Hellenistic influence on Buddhism that took place in the area that is today Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the northwestern border regions of India, beginning with the conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C. Graeco-Buddhism, which this syncretism has been termed, greatly influenced for instance artists, as illustrated by the Hellenistic features of the Gandhāran statues depicting Śākyamuni. It is perhaps the Hellenistic influence we have to thank for having any depictions of Śākyamuni at all, as prior to this influence the Buddha was in fact only depicted indirectly, by means of for example his footprints and the wheel of the Dharma.

The Manuscript

The manuscript consists of two fragments made of leather, a feature unique in the collection of manuscripts presented here, and overall quite unusual. The second unique feature is that it is written in the Bactrian language using the Graeco-Bactrian script. Judging from the script the manuscript seems most likely to date from the fifth century A.D. It may have originally belonged to a book in the *poṭhī*-format, but there is no longer any trace of a string-hole, since a certain amount of text has been lost between the two fragments.

Text and Translation

Recto

ϱ′ α′ (= 101)

1 *οτο σιδασο μαρ[ο ποναδο ταδο* *]βαν[δ]ąγο •••σαγǫδǫχτο χοαοανδǫ*
And whatever [puṇya may be] herefrom, [so] may [.....]-bandag (and) [....]sag-dukht .....

2 *αλο μαδο αλο π[ιδο αλο λογδο αλο πορ]ąνο αλǫ χǫ[α]υο αλο βραδρανο αλǫ*
with (their) mothers, fa[thers, daughters, son]s, sisters (and) brothers, (and) with

3 *οισπο παρολ̨ω[γοσιγο* *αβι]ρąδǫ οτο σιδ[ασ]ο μąρǫ μισο ποναδο*
all (their) deceas[ed relatives, obtai]n (it); and whatever further puṇya may be herefrom,

4 *ταδο πιρψτο [* *]δǫ ολο αλǫ μąδǫ αλο πιδο [α]λο χοαυ[ο]*
so [may] (our) heirs [with their husbands] (and) wives, (and) the mothers, fathers, sisters,

5 *αλο βρąδ[α]ρανǫ[* *α]βιρ[αδο] ǫτǫ σιδąσǫ μąρǫ μισο ποναδο*
(and) brothers (of the latter) [.....] obtain (it); and whatever further puṇya may be herefrom,

6 *τąδο σιδǫ <μανο> μ̨ω[σ]ǫ μ[* *]αρ[ ]ο οαυąμǫ αλο ąστο οτąνο οισ-*
so whatever [servants] now [belong] to my ..... dwelling or home – may they all

7 *π[ο] βοδ[••]γο ąβ[ιραδο οτο σιδασο μαρο μισο]πονąδο •[••]βανǫβανδą<γο>*
..... ob[tain it; and whatever further] puṇya may be [herefrom], so may [.....]ban-bandag,

8 *κ[ι]δο λιβο τǫ[* *]•[ ]δǫ αβιρąδ[ο] ναμ̨ωο βǫ-*
who [copied] the text, [.....] obtain (it). Homage to the bu-

Verso

1 *δδǫ σιδασǫ μαρ[ο μισο ποναδο ταδο* *]..... σο μαργǫ ..... μορδο*
ddha. Whatever [further puṇya may be] herefrom, [so may .....] (both) dead

2 *οδο ζοοąνδαγǫ[* *]..... ο ναμ̨ωο σąοκομąνο*
and living [..... obtain it]. Homage to Śākyamuni

3 *βοδδο ναμωǫ[* *ν]ąμωǫ λω̨γǫασφαροραζο βοδδǫ νą-*
buddha, homage [to ..... buddha, h]omage to Lokeśvararāja buddha, ho-

4 *μωο σιρογρ•[* *]ρβ..... βοδδο ναμωο ραδανǫκ-*
mage to .....[..... buddha, homage to .....]..... buddha, homage to Ratnak-

5 *ωταμο βοδδ[ο ναμωο* *]ο β[ο]δδǫ ναμωο σανδąροβąνο βǫ-*
ottama buddh[a, homage to .....] buddha, homage to Candrabhānu bu-

6 *δδο ναμωο ρ[* *να]μ̨ωǫ ραδανοζαυο βοδδǫ ναμ-*
ddha, homage to R[atna(?)-..... buddha, ho]mage to Ratna..... buddha, hom-

7 *ωο ραδανο•[* *σο]μηρǫβηραμο βοδδο ναμ̨ω-*
age to Ratna[..... buddha, homage to Su]meru..... buddha, homage

8 *ǫ σομηροκ•[* *]βοζǫ βǫδδο νąμωο ζι•ǫ βǫδδο [ ]*
to Sumeruk[alpa buddha, homage to .....]..... buddha, homage to ..... buddha ...

A Mīmāṃsaka Among the Buddhists

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 269-285
Editor: Eli Franco
Material: Birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān type I
Date: 6th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit

This Brahmanic treatise is the only one of its kind found in a collection of Buddhist texts from this area.

Background

This manuscript is unique in the Schøyen Collection in two ways. First, it is the only philosophical text that has been identified so far, and, secondly, it is the only one that belongs to a non-Buddhist work, namely a Mīmāṃsā treatise. As far as we know, no fragments of any Brahmanical school of thought has so far been found in the available collections of Buddhist Central-Asian manuscripts.

That the text is a Mīmāṃsā treatise is easily recognizable, as no other philosophical tradition connects in such an intimate manner philosophy of language in general with the issue of the validity of the Veda. The general background of the discussion can be identified as the Tarkapāda section of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*, and therefore the manuscript probably belongs to one of its lost commentaries. The opponent is most likely a Nyāyika who held a minority opinion in that school concerning the impermanence of means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) and the permanence of number. The proponent can probably be identified as Bhavadāsa (early fifth century A.D.), the first commentator on the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*, and supposedly the first one to introduce a discussion of the *pramāṇas* other than *pratyakṣa* (direct perception) into the Mīmāṃsā tradition.

The Manuscript

The manuscript consists of three fragments that all belong to the same folio. It is written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, and can consequentially be dated to the sixth century A.D. The language is Sanskrit. The left portion is missing. The order of the recto and verso side of the folio can be deduced from the contents of the discussion.

From the fragments the following tenets held by the opponent may be extracted: 1) The relation between word and object is created; 2) The meaning of a word is established by convention; 3) (By implication:) The object of a word is a (impermanent?) *jāti*; 4) All the means of knowledge are impermanent; 5) Numbers, etc., are permanent; 6) (By implication:) The Veda is authoritative; 7) The Veda is impermanent. The proponent's view does not deviate from the well-known Mīmāṃsā position. The terminology is however exceptional at least on two points. First, when referring to the object of a word (*śabdārtha*) only the term *jāti* is used, and not the usual *ākṛti* and *dravya*. Secondly, the relationship between the word and object is said to be derived from their own being (*svābhāvika*).

Translation[1]

recto:

1. ... before the usage of words the cognition exists in a different manner, so that (it) c/would be penetrated by a previous word. And it is not [the case that the performance of] Agnihotra, etc., would be purposeless/meaningless. This is not [the case] (i.e. they are not meaningless) because [of the undesired consequence that] there would be no everyday practice by means of these [sacrifices]. For [everyday practice] is not [accomplished] by means of purposeless [actions]. ... [In the case of everyday practice e.g., if one claims that planting seeds etc., will lead to fruit, etc.] a previous relation [between an activity such as planting of seeds and its purpose] has been observed, but this is not so in the case of Agnihotra etc. [because the connection between their performance and their supposed future results has not been previously observed]. ...
2. ... [Objection: Your position is not correct] because without convention there would be no apprehension/understanding of an object of an aggregate. [Reply:] In [the case of objects] such as the hare's horn, etc., the apprehension of the object of an aggregate is observed to depend on the apprehension of the parts [of the aggregate] without convention. ... Non-existing objects/things like ... because [their] parts do not have an apprehended object ...
3. ... The apprehension [of the object by convention] is not established because in this manner an infinite regress [would result]. That too is a refutation indeed because if [the relation between word and object] is produced [then] because the relation [involved in establishing the convention] too is produced, there would be an infinite regress. Thus, in respect to the effect (i.e. in respect to a specific relation between word and object which is to be effected) too ... the objects [of the involved words are already known]. In this [case, the apprehension of the object of] an aggregate [is established] without a convention.
4. ... Would [the word used to establish a new convention be one whose object is apprehended] or [would it be one] whose object is not apprehended? If it is one whose object is not apprehended, the convention [that a certain new word designates a certain object] cannot be effected by it. If [on the other hand, it is one whose object] is apprehended, this [last word], in its turn, is one whose object is not apprehended without a convention. Thus, for it too by means of which [word] ... the convention is effected, that [would be a word whose object] is apprehended [or a word whose object is not apprehended]. ...
5. ... [If an unapprehended] object has to be understood for the latter [word], [then] when there is no apprehension of the object of the earlier [word], the convention [to be established for the latter word] is not successful. Precisely by these reasons the permanence of the relation [between word and object] should be known. Just as in the case with *ratna* (diamond) and *rautā*(?), [the assumption of] creating the relation [by a certain person/God] ... [would lead to the same] inadmissible consequence as [above]. In that [case] ...
6. ... [He] negates [the impermanence of the relation between word and object by saying:] "because there would not be a usage/employment [of a word] for the sake of another [person]." In this manner he negates that [not only the word, but] also the relation [between word and object] is a result. ... For if/when there is no relation based on own-being [between word and object] the usage [of a word] for the sake of another [person] is not possible. ... albeit impermanent, just as a word ...
7. ... a permanent object. And no one holds the view that the universal is impermanent. For, surely, [the universal is not established as impermanent] neither for those who hold the view that the [universal] does not at all exist, such as the Sāṃkhyas and the Buddhists, nor for those for whom, in as much as it is existing, it is permanent, such as the Vaiśeṣikas. ...

verso:

1. ... [No]thing [meaningful/helpful] has been said [by you]. [Reply:] This is no fault. This [statement of ours] does not have the purpose of/does not amount to showing that the universal does not exist, rather this, [namely] that the universal is not impermanent is [our] point of view. This [point of view] amounts to [the point of view] that [the universal] exists. The truth, however, is this position: There is permanence of the universal. ... but it is not ...
2. ... they are deluding [their] opponent. Therefore, the universal exists and it is permanent. Here, according to the *pūrvapakṣa*, the mere admission (i.e. mere assumption) is without a fault; everything else is faulty. This is the meaning. In which way (i.e. the reason why) everything is not faulty ... the universal [is/is not established by means of?] perception ...
3. ... [Kaṇāda?], Kapila, etc., accept the validity of the Veda. [They do] not [have] the purpose [of establishing] by argumentation [the permanence of the Veda]. For it is not [the case that] when the validity of the Veda is established, [i.e.] when it is admitted because of the prosperity of all those who are familiar with the Veda (*traividya*), a certain ... having been contradicted/

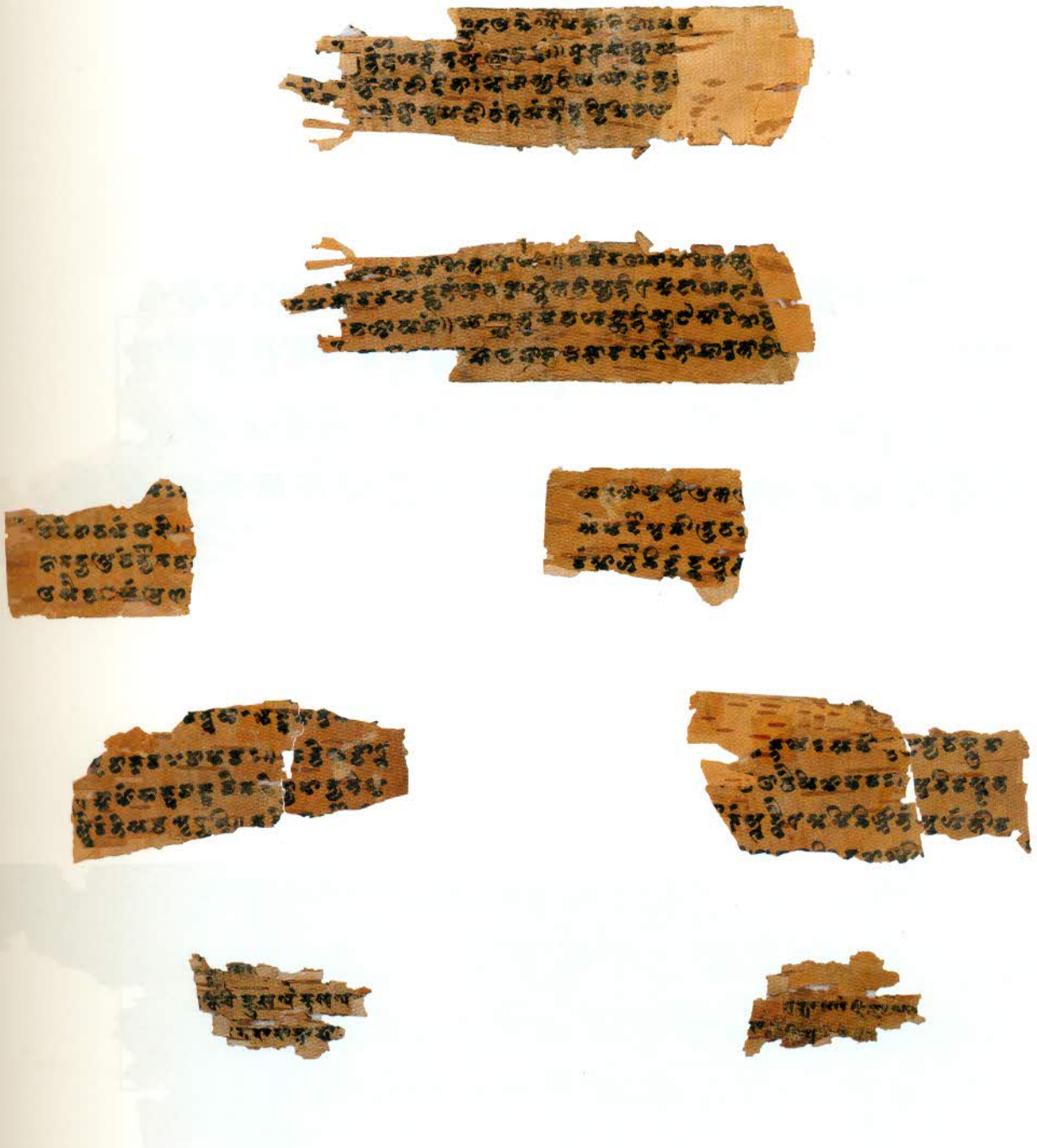
1 BMSC vol. II, 272-277.

negated [previously] ...
4. ...[Objection:] The appropriateness [of your reason] in respect to the validity [of the Veda] is [not] possible because there is no instance [for your reason] "[The Vedic sentences are valid] because they are permanent." How could a permanent means of knowledge possibly be observed? And for the contrary (i.e. the observation of a permanent means of knowledge) there is no instance because it is contradictory. For perception ... ... [Reply:] That is not correct. It is not established ...
5. [Objection:] Because it is permanent, the Veda would be no means of knowledge. And the permanence of the Veda is not established in the position of another [philosopher] because there is a reason for impermanence: The Veda is not permanent because it is an aggregate of words, [like] the Rāmāyaṇa . ... [An impermanent means of knowledge?] is observed, but nothing permanent is observed [to be] a means of knowledge. ...
6. ... [Reply:] This turns out to be the same [issue/point for my opponents]. For they too are able to say by mere admission that number etc., are something permanent . In this case, both (i.e. a permanent means of knowledge and permanent entities) have to be admitted by you, or if numbers etc., although they are permanent ... are said [to be impermanent] by mere admission [then you would have to admit] numbers, etc., which are perishable. ...
7. ... In this case, if it is said that number, etc., are not means of knowledge, [then] just as they are permanent and not means of knowledge, in the same way the Veda too [is so]. If, on the other hand, it is said that they too are means of knowledge, this being the case, both means of knowledge (i.e. number, etc., and the Veda) [are permanent]. ... Being permanent does not deviate (i.e. is common to both of them). Thus, these too [are accepted as permanent?] a means of knowledge. ...

Miscellaneous

Buddhastotras of Mātṛceṭa

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 305-311
Editor: Jens-Uwe Hartmann
Material: Palm leaf and birch bark
Script: Late Gupta to Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type II
Date: 5th century A.D. to 7th-8th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit



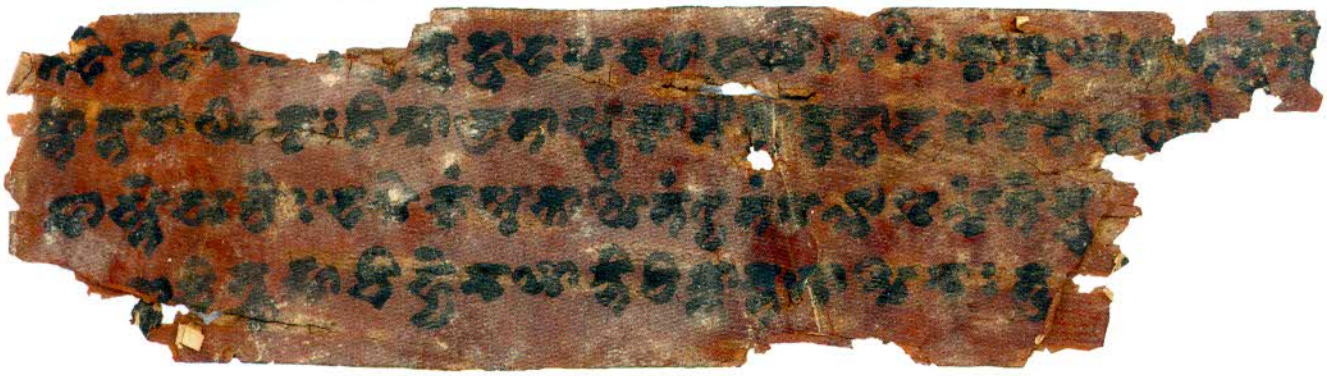
The manuscripts contain the two famous hymns to the Buddha written by the Indian poet Mātṛceṭa. The fragments are a welcome aid in the further restoration of the partially preserved longer hymn *Varṇārhavarṇā*.

Background

Hymns (*stotra*) to the Buddha were popular in the monasteries of Central Asia, if we are to judge from the large quantity of manuscripts that have been preserved. Among these we often find manuscripts containing one or both of the hymns composed by the Indian poet Mātṛceṭa (first century A.D.), the *Śatapañcāśatka/Prasādapratibhodbhava* (PPU) and the *Catuḥśataka/Varṇārhavarṇā* (VAV). Judging from the manuscripts presented here these texts were also well known in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent.

The Manuscripts

The twelve fragments belong to six different manuscripts, two written on palm leaf and four on birch bark. The scripts range from a late Gupta variety (fifth century A.D.) to Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type II (seventh-eight century A.D.). Two preserve verses from the PPU (1 and 2), while four preserve verses from the VAV (3-6). The fragments of the VAV are an especially welcome find since this text has not yet been recovered in its entirety in the original Sanskrit (only 80% is preserved).



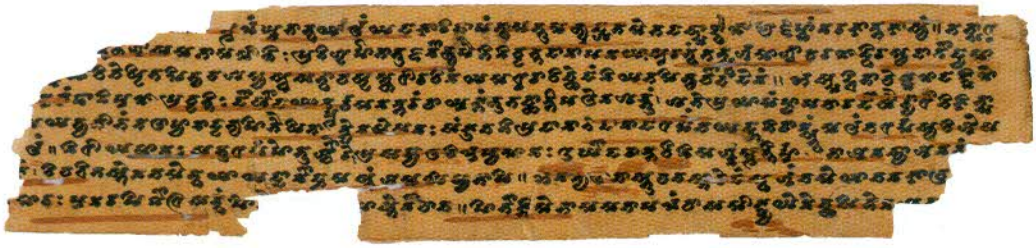
Transliteration, folio 4b (*Varṇārhavarṇa;* folio no. 19), recto
1 + + .. [v]īm anuyāsyaṃti katham ekāṃśavād[i]naḥ ‖ ida[m]. + + ///
2 na prakāśāndhakārayauḥ prakṛṣṭam antaraṃ yadvat t[v]advā[d]. + + ///
3 vāgvastumāttram evāsāv ayaṃ padapadārthavān* vyākhy. + + ///
4 t[v]advādaparavādayau ‖ asaṃ[pradhāry]am evaitad [bh]avamokṣā .[t]. ///

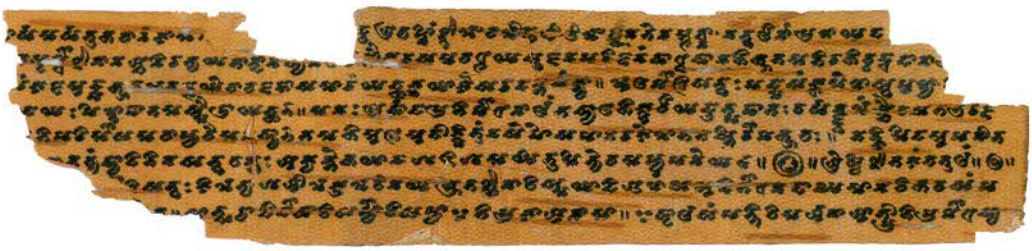
verso
1 [ta]d eva jina .. .. .v. tvadvādaparavādayau ‖ ihaikāntayathātatvaṃ [mau] ///
2 ntāntarāyikaḥ vimātratāstu kāto [nyā] tvadvādaparavādayau + + ///
3 pās te sarve idam ekaṃ subhāṣitaṃ dhṛtaṃ balābalaṃ [te tva] + + + + ///
4 + .ā cit karha cid yena yānti vikk[r]āntagāminaḥ t[ū] + + + + + ///

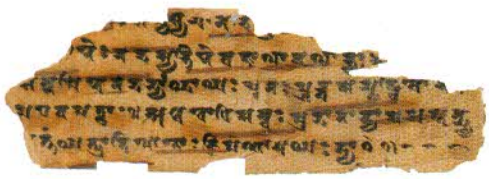
Miscellaneous

Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 313-322
Editor: Jens-Uwe Hartmann
Material: Birch bark
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I and II
Date: 6th century and 7th-8th century
Language: Sanskrit







The *Jātakamālā* tells the stories of 34 of the Buddha's previous lives. Its author Āryaśūra is considered one of the foremost of Indian Buddhist poets.

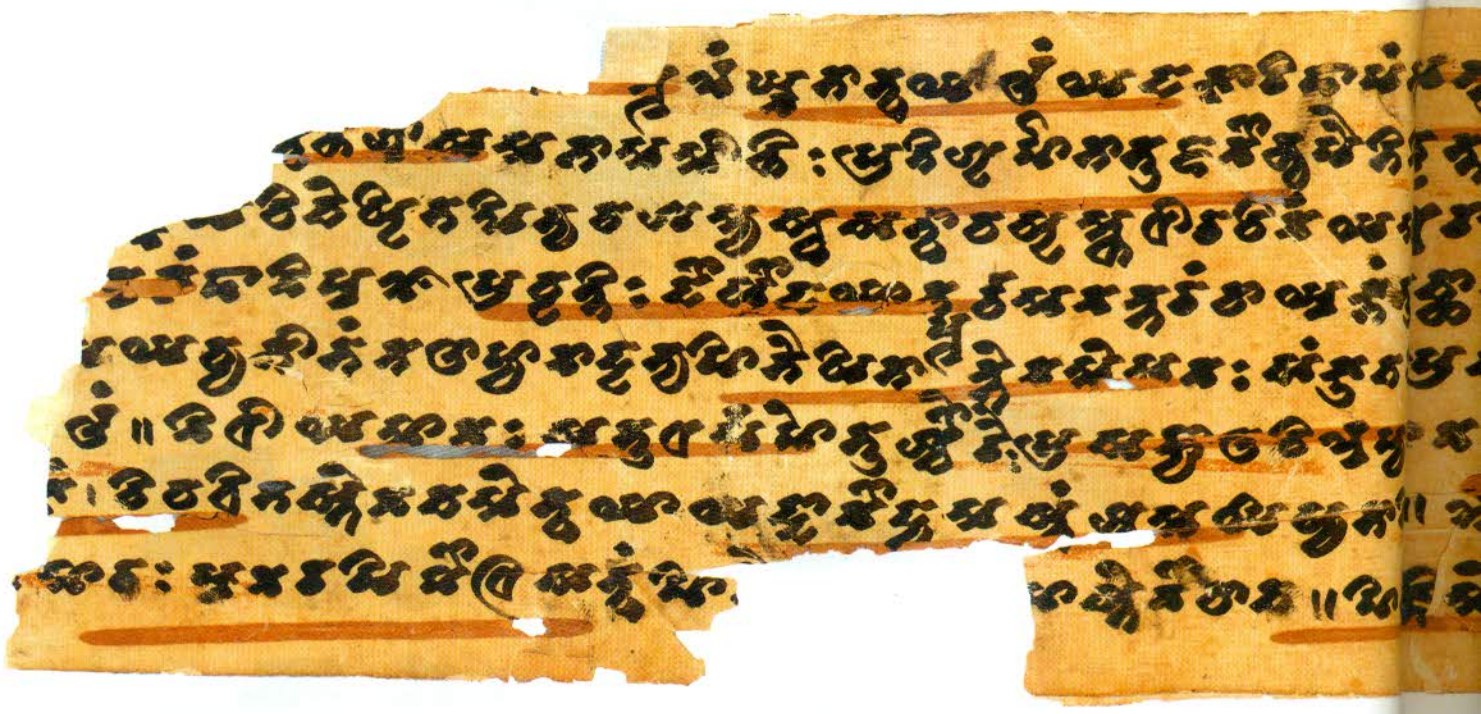
Background

The *Jātakamālā* ("Garland of Birth Stories"), written by the Indian poet Āryaśūra (first century A.D.?), retells the story of the Buddha's previous lives in 34 legendary accounts well known in the Buddhist narrative tradition. Āryaśūra is remembered as one of the main contributors to the emergence of classical Sanskrit poetics in Buddhist literature. The *Jātakamālā* has been preserved in Sanskrit (Kern, 1891) as well as in Tibetan translation.

The Manuscript

The 17 fragments belong to five different manuscripts. The material is birch bark, and most of the fragments are regrettably quite small. The scripts used are Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I (mss. 1 and 2) and Type II (mss. 3-5), respectively dated to the sixth and seventh-eight centuries A.D.

(continued on the next page)

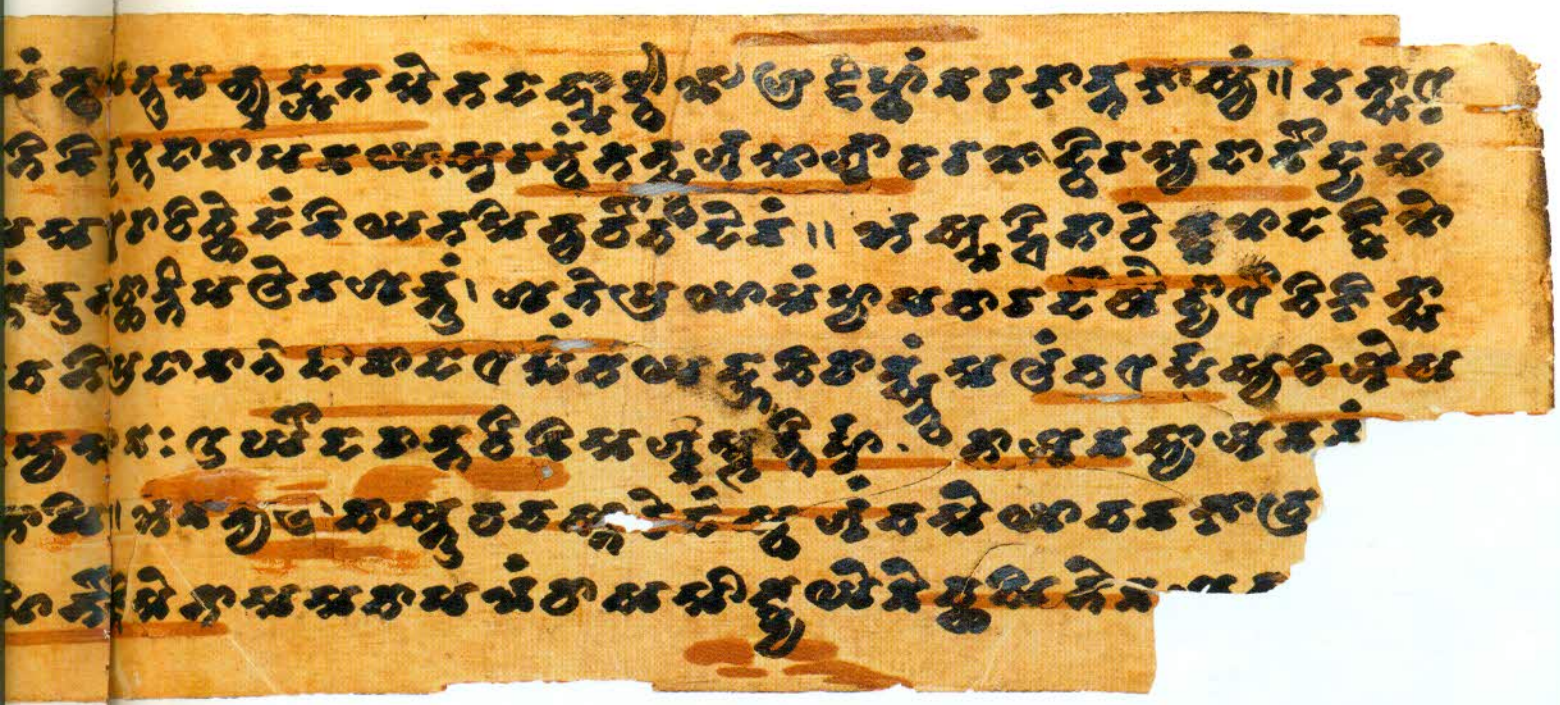


Transliteration, folio 1 (*Śreṣṭhi-* and *Aviṣahyaśreṣṭhijātaka*), recto

1 /// + + + + + + + + + + + [m]ūlaṃ ghnatā tvayārthaṃ yad akāri pāpaṃ tvā
2 /// + + + + .[ṛbh]. gā samatām amībhiḥ pratigṛhītā tu jano bhyupaiti nivṛtta
3 /// + + + ... viceṣṭitam ity avagamya svasatvāvaṣṭambhadhīra<ṃ> vinayan
4 /// + + .. [ka]ṃpānipuṇā pravṛttiḥ doṣodayāt pūrvam anantaraṃ vā yuktaṃ
5 /// + .. yavyatītaṃ tathā hy anādṛtya hitaiṣitān te na me manaḥ saṃkucati p
6 /// + rthaṃ ‖ nidhīyamānaḥ sa tu dharmahetuś cauraiḥ prasahyātha vilupyaḥ
7 /// [kaṃ] | vivardhitas tena ca me tvayāyad dānodyamas taṃ śamayiṣyatāpi
8 /// māraḥ punar api bodhisatvaṃ hi .[ai] + + + + [h]astenovāca ‖ hitoktim e

Parts of seven *jātakas* are found in the five manuscripts. These are: 1) *Śreṣṭhi-* and *Aviṣahyaśreṣṭhijātaka* (two stories of the Buddha as the head of a guild), 2) *Vyāghrījātaka* (giving his flesh to a tigress), *Maitrībalajātaka* (as the generous king Maitrībala), 3) *Śarabhajaka* (as a deer), 4) *Aviṣahyaśreṣṭhijātaka* (as in no. 1), 5) *Śibijaka* (as the king of the Śibis), and *Viśvaṃtarāvadāna* (as the prince Viśvaṃtara).

The third manuscript deserves special mention as it displays a curious phenomenon. The probable recto side (not included here) is written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I and contains text from an unknown collection of stories. The verso side, on the other hand, is written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type II and contains a story from the Jātakamālā. There is nothing unusual about the re-use of a folio. What is curious is that the *Jātakamālā* does not start on the verso side, and that another folio with exactly the same appearance surfaced in Japan when the work on this material was done. A probable solution is that a folio consisting of four or more layers of bark must have been separated in order to produce more material on which to write a new text, resulting in a manuscript of two (or possibly more) leaves with one text on the recto and another on the verso side.



pam tvān
i nivṛtta
vinayan
yuktaṃ
kucati p
vilupyar
iṣyatāpi
toktim e

attum abhyudgatam etad asmā jvālāgrajihvaṃ narakāntakāsyaṃ || tat sādhu
ānāpanayaḥ suratvaṃ tat svargamārgāvaraṇād viramya dānodyamā
adhurāvicchedaṃ niyatam ity avocad enaṃ || asmaddhitāvekṣaṇadakṣiṇe
u tacchāntipathena gantuṃ | gate prayāmaṃ hy apacāradoṣair vyādho cikitsā
dānāt* dānād adharmaṃ ca yad ūcivāns tvaṃm arthaṃ ca dharmasya viśeṣa
ānaḥ aughodarāntarvinimagnamūrttir hutāśanasyāśana[t]āṃ +
ananyathā cāstu vacas ta[v]edaṃ svargaṃ ca me yācanakā vra + + +
ā mama cāpalaṃ vā samīkṣya yenecchasi tena .. .. + +

An Unusual ye dharmā *Formula*

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 337-349
Editor: Lore Sander
Material: Copper plate
Script: North-Eastern Gupta
Date: 5th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit/Prakrit

This copper plate is inscribed with the *ye dharmā* formula, believed to carry magic and protective power for the bearer. The formula is a condensation of the Buddha's teaching.

Background

The *ye dharmā* formula was first uttered by the arhat Aśvajit (Pāli: Assaji) when asked by Upatissa about his teacher and the Dharma that he taught. When Aśvajit uttered these words Upatissa is said to have experienced a breakthrough of understanding. He would later be known as Śāriputra, the famous disciple of the Buddha.

The formula translates as:

> "Those phenomena which arise from a cause,
> the Tathāgata declared what is their cause
> and what is their cessation.
> Thus the great Śramaṇa has spoken."

Apart from being a brief presentation of the teaching of the Buddha,

Transliteration

1 siddham* śrī a .. [ya] śrī ye tharmā śrī .. [he]tuprabhā[va] śoke-
2 tu taṣa taṭhāgata ❁ hy avada taṣaṃ ca
3 yo nīrotha evaṃ ❁ vadī mahāśrā-
4 maṇ[a] ‖ ❀ ‖

the formula was also believed to carry magic and protective power. After the sixth century it gained increasing popularity in the Buddhist cult, and can be found in manuscripts, on stone sculptures and votive tablets, on seals and clay plaques and bricks, at the bottom of plinths of Buddhist bronzes, and on graffiti scratched on rocks. This is the first example of a copper plate with this inscription on it.

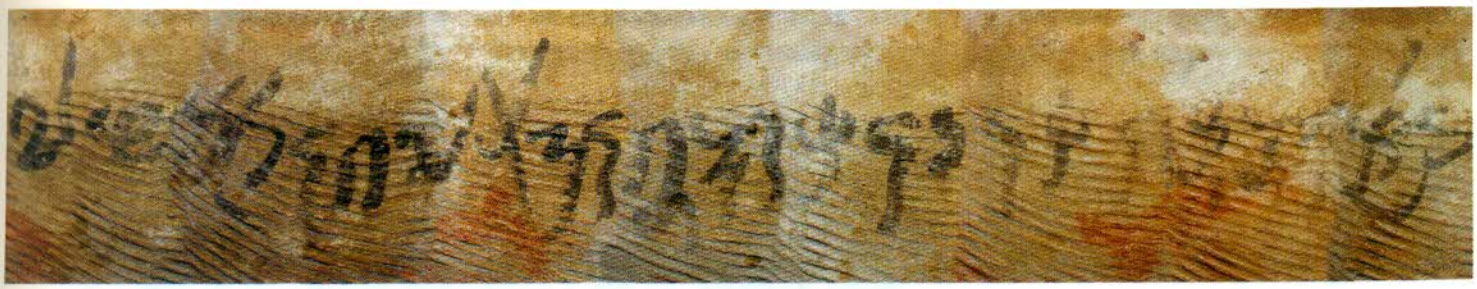
The Plate

The object is a small, thin copper plate, measuring 51 mm in height and 123 mm in length. It has two holes (one partly eroded) in the two upper corners, and a string or chain may have been passed through the holes. The script is a North Eastern Gupta, probably dated to the fifth century A.D. This might mean that it was produced in northeastern India, and then carried to the area where it was found, probably near Bāmiyān, Afghanistan. The language is Sanskrit, with some colloquial features. Orthographic mistakes are frequent in the *ye dharmā* verses, but some of the ones seen in this inscription are rare, such as for instance *taṭhāgata,* written here with a cerebral *ṭhā.*

Miscellaneous

A Jar with a Kharoṣṭhī Inscription

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. II, 351-355
Editor: Richard Salomon
Material: Clay jar
Script: Kharoṣṭī
Date 1st-3rd century A.D.
Language: Gāndhārī



Text and translation[1]

saghe catur[t]iśami [ra]danami acaryana dharmamuyana pratigrahe

"[Gift] to the universal community, in the possession of the Dharmamuyana masters at Radana (?)."

1 Read from right to left

This clay jar carries an inscription in Gāndhārī relating it to a Dharmaguptaka monastery. Jars such as this one were often employed as containers for manuscripts.

Background

Clay jars have been discovered in connection with several manuscript finds. Often manuscripts have been placed inside them, sometimes also human remains, before they have been interred within, for example, a stūpa. It was perhaps a custom to bury a deceased monk together with his religious books. It may be imagined that the textual material that have been found within such jars were worn out editions already copied, and not needed anymore. They were still representations of the Buddha's word and were therefore deposited at holy sites.

Often such jars carry inscriptions. These generally specify (1) the nature of the object, e.g. "this water-pot", (2) that this is a gift, *daṇamukha*, (3) the donor's name in the genitive case, (4) the specification of the recipients, e.g. "to the universal community, in the possession of the masters of X school", (5) the geographical location of the recipients, and (6) a statement of the benefit which the donor hopes to obtain as a result of the gift.[1]

1 See Salomon (1999) for a further discussion of inscribed jars from Gandhāra.

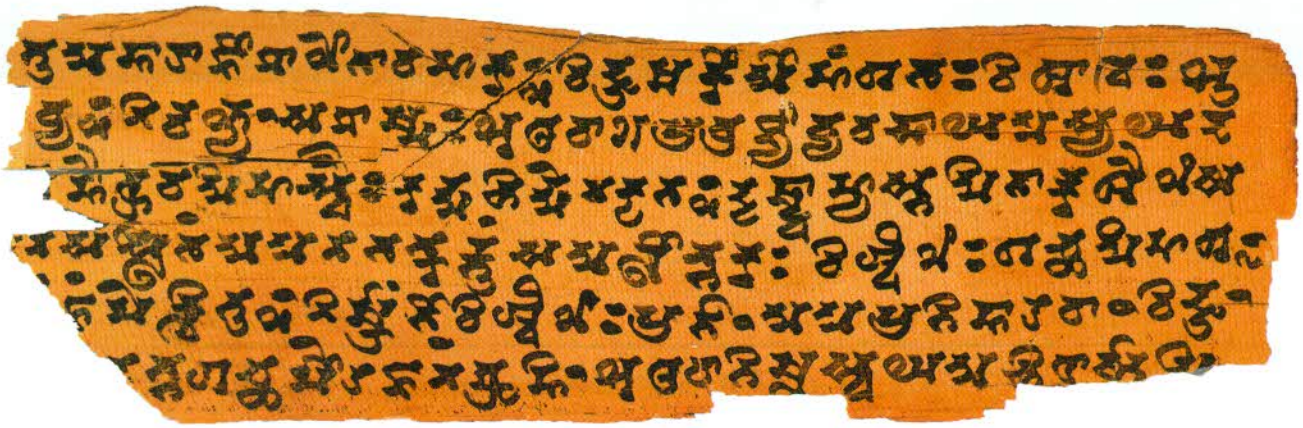
The Jar

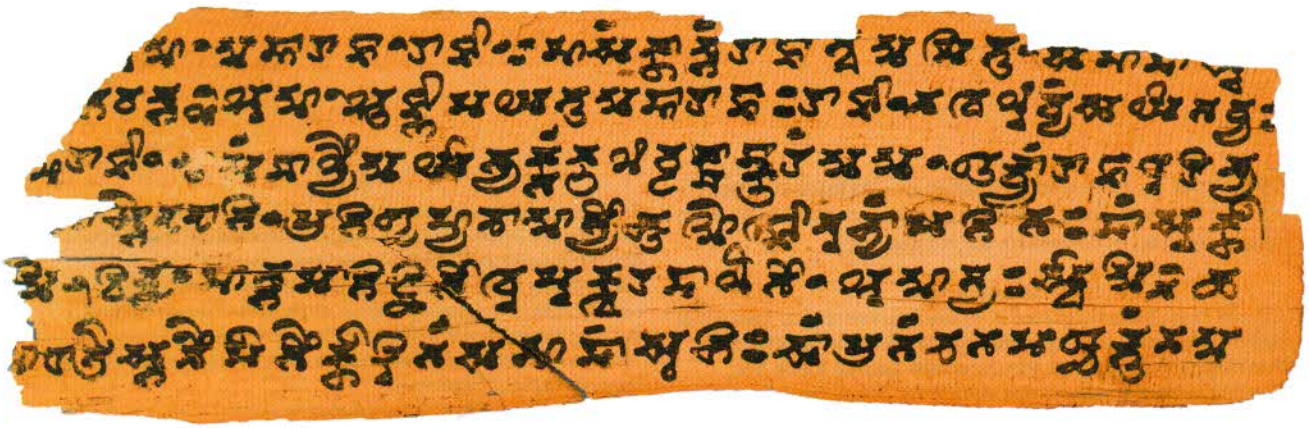
The present jar is spherical and made of clay, measuring 28.5 cm in diameter and 31 cm in height. It carries a dedicatory inscription in Kharoṣṭhī script and Gāndhārī language around its shoulder. The inscription is likely to be dated to between the first and early third century A.D., and some indications might favour the earlier part of this time range as more probable. The inscription translates as: "[Gift] to the universal community, in the possession of the Dharmamuyana masters at Radana (?)."

The donation is recorded to have been made to a master of the "Dharmamuya" school, probably to be identified with the well known Dharmaguptaka school. The word "Radana" (which can also be read as "Vadana") probably refers to an unknown location. There are also two rough and indistinct patterns in thick strokes of red ink at the middle level. It is uncertain what these signify, but they could have been emblems of the monasteries to which the objects were donated. When acquired by the Schøyen collection the jar contained bits of charcoal and other debris, and also fragments of birch bark with text written in late forms of the Brāhmi script (eight century A.D.), but these have probably been placed there in modern times.

A Fragment of a Play

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 245-249
Editor: Jens-Uwe Hartmann
Material: Palm leaf
Script: Late Gupta
Date: 5th-6th century A.D.
Language: Sanskrit and Prakrit





This fragment is the only example of a play in the collection, a genre that is generally quite rare within Buddhism, and even more so within early manuscript collections.

Background

Plays are not the most common type of Buddhist literature. Some examples have been found in the collections of Central Asia, and at least one of these, the *Śāriputraprakaraṇa* by Aśvagoṣa (first-second century A.D.), is a Buddhist play (cf. Waldenscmidt, 1965-, I: 10f. and 37f.). There is no translation of a play into Chinese, and Tibetan translations are available of only two later Indian plays, by Candragomin (fifth century A.D.?; cf. Hahn, 1974 and 1987) and Harṣadeva (seventh century A.D.; cf. Steiner, 1997). The present unknown play is the first example of this literary genre among the many manuscripts from Afghanistan.

The Manuscript

Regrettably, only a single fragment of the play has turned up so far. It is made of palm leaf, and is written in a late variety of the Gupta script, perhaps to be dated to the fifth or sixth century A.D. The fragment probably only preserves one third of the folio.

That it is a play we are dealing with is apparent, as all the characteristics of this genre are found, except for the division into acts: 1) a *vidūṣaka* (jester) appears; 2) abbreviations are used, such as *vidū* (for *vidūṣaka*) and *amā* (for *amātya*, "minister"); 3) the text consists of a mixture of prose and verse; 4) the language is a mixture of Sanskrit and Prakrit; 5) the text contains stage directions, such as *nirvarṇya* ("having contemplated") and *niṣkrāmto* ("exit"). It is not possible to say with certainty whether this is a Buddhist play or not, as no particular Buddhist features are evident.

Translation[1]

(a1) ... the great king, the boy so far am I (?). The Vidūṣaka is confused.
Viśākha: ... should ...
(a2) ... *Having contemplated, in tears, (he says)*:
Or
His decision for ordination **(a3)** ... lasting in this world what is done to me through my own deeds.
For, h aving seen the ... of the mountain of the sunset ... **(a4)** ... not remaining for me; death is not able to do this.
Viśvila: I will go (?).
(a5) ... to look at.
Exit Viśvila, to himself/in expectation: Or you should announce yourself to me!
Vidūṣaka: (a6) ...
(**Rāja**?): ... go (and) talk to the townsfolk! Or stay, (and) I will address (them) myself **(b1)** ...
Minister: Great king!
King: Here sovereignty is transferred, but yet: a friend from childhood **(b2)** ... you, sir.
Minister: Let the great king command!
King: By no means is he to be cheated **(b3)** ...
...
King: Him whom I abandoned in childhood, a sprout of my family tree, in the heavy yoke of the king(s position) (b4) ...
...: ... he gives you; and the minister, having received (it), fell on his knees to the ground, the friend from childhood **(b5)**
...
...: I ...
Vidūṣaka: Look, installed is the one protected by Puṣkara.
Minister: Master, **(b6)** ...
... (You) drank from the breast of the nurse and played with sand; but presently to practice austerity
is not ...

1 BMSC vol. III, 248-249.

A Copper Scroll Inscription

Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection vol. III, 251-278
Editor: Gudrun Melzer, w/Lore Sander
Material: Copper
Script: Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I
Date: 492-493 A.D.
Language: Sanskrit

This copper scroll served as a foundation deed at the consecration of a stūpa in the fifth century A.D., probably in the area of Ṭālaqān, northern Afghanistan. It contains references to Buddhist texts as well as names of various donors.

Background

Dated Brāhmi inscriptions, such as this one, from the region of Greater Gandhāra and ancient Bactria (northern Afghanistan) are very rare. Moreover, the patrons of the monasteries and the historical context of these manuscripts are still almost completely shrouded in obscurity. The present copper scroll is therefore of extraordinary epigraphical and historical importance. It was ordered for the erection and consecration of a stūpa in the village or town called Śārdīysa in the realm of Mehama. The exact location of this is uncertain, but one possibility is the region around modern Ṭālaqān. The list of donors on the inscription includeds the names of famous kings of the so-called Hephthalites (Alchon Huns), among them Khiṅgila, Toramāṇa and Javūkha.

The Scroll

The scroll was originally rolled up, and was probably never meant to be read, but to be placed inside a stūpa as a foundation deed as well as a consecrating inscription. The script is similar to Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type I, and is probably to be dated roughly between the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth century. The year recorded in the inscription, 68, probably refers to the Laukika era, which would correspond to 492-493 A.D. The scroll has broken, and two lines out of 54 are missing.

The inscription begins with a verse praising the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha. This is followed by a quotation from the beginning of a Mahāyāna sūtra, the *Śrīmatībrāhmaṇīparipṛcchā*, containing the famous *Pratītyasamutpāda* formula of Nāgārjuna, as well as the introductory verses to his *Mūlamādhyamikakārikās*. Following this, the historical core of the inscription relates the date, the purpose of the donation, and the names and titles of the donors. It ends with seven verses composed in classical Sanskrit metres.

Transliteration

First part

1 + + + [‖] jayaty ādau [tā]va[d da]śaba[la] + + .. [p]ta[va]○ca ..[ḥ] prabhājā[la]ḥ śr[īmān].r.bhuvanatam[o]
2 + + + + [vṛt*] tat[o dha]rmāmbhoj[o] hṛda[ya]j[a]rajaḥ[śā]nt[i]janano jayaty ārya ◊[ś c]ā[g]ryo muniva[ca]
3 + + + + [ṇa]gaṇaḥ ‖ evaṃ mayā śrutam ekasamaye bhagavān bārāṇasy[ā]ṃ vijahāra ṛṣipa
4 + + + + + + [m]. [ha]tā • bhik[ṣ]usaṃghena sārdhaṃ saptamātrair bhi[k].uśataiḥ saṃbahulaiś ca [b]odhisatv[ai]
r ma
5 + + .[v]. + [a]tha khalu bhagavān p[ū]rvāhṇakālasamaye nivāsya pātrac[ī]varam ādāyāyuṣmatāji
6 [t]. na bo[dh]isatvena mahāsatve[na] paścācchramaṇena sārdhaṃ bārāṇasīṃ nagarīṃ piḍāya prāvikṣat* [•]
7 atha khalu bhagavān bārāṇasyāṃ nagaryāṃ sāvadāna[ṃ] piṇḍ[ā]ya caran yena śrīmatyā brāhmaṇy[ā] nive
8 śa[n]aṃ [t]e[no]pasaṃkrāntaḥ upasaṃkramya piṇḍāyaikānte sthād adrākṣīc chrīmatir brāhmaṇī bhaśāvaṃtaṃ
9 dūrata eva p[r]āsādikaṃ prasadanīyaṃ śāntendriyaṃ śāntamānasaṃ śamadamapāramiprāptam utta
10 [ma]śa[ma]thapāramiga[taṃ śā]ntaṃ dā[n]ta. guptaṃ nāgaṃ jite◊ndriyaṃ pa[ra]mayā śubhavarṇapuṣ[ka]la
11 tayā samanvāgataṃ hradam ivā[ccha]ṃ [v]i. [r]. + nnam anāvilaṃ suvarṇayūpam ivābh[yu]dgata[ṃ] niṣpra[ka]
ṃ[pa]
12 m āni[ṃ]jya[prā]ptaṃ śriyā jva[l]. + + + + + + [ja]mānaṃ viroca[m]. ..ṃ [dṛṣṭ]vā cāsyāḥ cit[t]aṃ prasannaṃ ..
13 .. [nnaci]ttā yena bhaga + + + + + + + .. saṃ[kra]mya [bh]. + + + ...[au] .i .. + + .[i] + .[i] +
14 + + .[o].[isatvasya] ma[hā]sa[t]. + + + + + .[ā]ṃs [t]enāṃ[j]. + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +
15 ///
16 ///

Second part

17 + v. nt. m eta[d] av[ocat*] śrut. [m]. y. [bhaga]n na
18 + t[a]m iti • kevaṃ[rūpo] s[ti] bhaśavan dharmaḥ
19 [yas sa] bh. gavatā [p]rava[r]tit. + + ... + + + + + + + + + + + [t]ad avocat* avidyāḥ pra[t]yayā[ḥ] śrīma
20 .. .. saṃ[sk]ārapratyayaṃ vijñā[na]. .. + + + + + + + + + .. ma[rūpa]pratyayaṃ ṣa[ḍ]āyatanaṃ saḍāya
21 .. na .. tyaya. sparśa[ḥ] sparśapratyayā vedanā vedanāpratyayā .. + + + + + + + [p]ādāna[m upā]dānapra
22 tyay[o] bhavaḥ bhavaprat[y]ayā jātir jātipratya[y]ā [ja]rāmaraṇaśok. + + + + + + + .. nasyopāyāsāḥ saṃ[bha]
23 [va]ṃ[t]y eva[ṃ]m as[ya k]eva[las]ya [mahato] ..ḥ[kha] .. [n].. sya sa[mudayo bhā]vati [:] a + + + + + + +
ranirodh[aḥ sa]ṃs[k]āra[ni]ro
24 [dh]ād [v]ijñānanirodhaḥ vi[jñā]nanirodhān nāmarū[pa]nirodhaḥ nāmarū[pa]ni[rodhā] .ṣa .[āyatana]nir[odha]ḥ
ṣa[ḍ]āya[tananiro]
25 [dhā]t [s]parśanirodhaḥ sparśanirodhād vedanānirodhaḥ ve .. .[ā]niro[dhā]t [tṛ]ṣṇānirodhaḥ tṛṣ[ṇ]ānirodhād
upādānanirodha[ḥ] u

26 [p]ādananiro[dhād bha]vanirodha[ḥ] bhava .[irodhāj j]āti[n]irodhaḥ [jā]ti .. [rodhāj] jarā[ma]ṇa[śoka] parideva[du]ḥkhadaur[ma] +
27 sy[o]pāyā[sā] niru[dhya]ṃta evam asya kevalasya maha[to] duḥkha[s]ka[ndhasya nirodho bhavat]īda[ṃ] tac chrīmati [na] .. + +
28 + + + [m]. ṣipata .e .. [ga]dāve tathāgatena dharma[ca]kraṃ pravarti[ta]m apravartya[ṃ] śrama[ṇ]e[na vā brāhma]ṇ[e]na vā
29 + + + + + + + + [v]. [b]ra[hm]aṇā vā kena[c]i[d vā] punar loke sahadha[rm]eṇa • ‖ idam avocad bhaga[vā]n [āptama] .. [ś].[rīma]
30 .. .r. [hm]. .. + [ji]taś ca bodhisatvaḥ sadevamānuṣāsuragandhar[v]aś ca lok[o] bhagavad[bh]āṣitam abhya[na] ndan* ‖ ๑
31 [a]nirodham anutpādam anucchedam aśāśvatam* a[n]e[k]ārtham anānārtham anāgamam anirgamam* [yaḥ prat]ītya[sa]
32 mutpādaṃ prapaṃcopaśamaṃ śivam* deśayāmāsa saṃbuddhas taṃ vade vadatāṃ varam* saṃvatsare aṣṭhāṣaṣṭita
33 me 68 ‖ kārtika[mā]saś[u]k[l]atith[au] saptamyām* atra vivase pratiṣṭhāpito yaṃ tathāgatacai[t]y[o] dhāt[u] garbha ..
34 mahāvihārasvāminā opandaputreṇa tālagānikadevaputraṣāhī .i/ī + + + + + + + + +
35 .. vena sārdhaṃ pitrā opandena sārdhaṃ ṣatnyā sāradaṣāh[i]duhitrā [b]uddh. + + + + + + + + +
36 hāvihā[ra]svāsinyā arccavāmanāyāḥ sārdhaṃ pitrā ho .. g[a]yena mātr[ā ma]hād. [v]y. + + +
37 sārdhaṃ kaly[ā]ṇamitreṇa ācāryara[t]n[ā]gamena sārdhaṃ ma[hā]ṣāhikhīṅgīlena sārdhaṃ devarāje[na]
38 toramānena • sārdhaṃ mahāvihārasvāminyās sāsāyāḥ sārdhaṃ mahāṣāhime[ha]me .. • sārdhaṃ
39 sādavīkhena sārdhaṃ mahārāj[e].. javūkhena sādavīkhaputreṇa • mehama[r]ājye vartamā[n]e •
40 yasyādyāpi dhaṣārahārakumu[da]sspaṣṭhīkṛśaṃkhaprabhaiś chatr[o]dārani .. ḍhavedikadhar[aiś] cañcatpatā
41 ka[jv]alai stū[p]air bhāti mahī dharādharanibhais trailokya[pū]jyārcitai ta[ṃ] mūrdh[n]ā namate nṛmaulimu[ku a]vyālīḍha
42 [p]ādaṃ jina[m*] ‖ sa[ṃ]kalpā .y[e] .i .. [t]i ke .i[t/n] suviśuddhān pūryaṃtā te [p]rāṇibhṛ[tā]m āśu jaśad va[ḥ] ni[st]riṃśo[dbh]rāpta
43 [śa]rā[pā]tavimuktaṃ : kṣipra[ṃ] bhūyā[d] brāh[m]asurāvāsasa[m]āmam* ‖ śāntiṃ gatasya suśatasya śarīrabhṛd[bh]i
44 s[tū]pai[r] i[ya]ṃ vasuma[t]ī pra[t]ip. [r]i[t]ā yaiḥ [t]iṣ[ṭh]a[ṃ]tu dāmanakṛtapramukhā[n]i tāni • kalpaṃ yathācalapa
45 .. [ḥ] surarājajuṣṭhaḥ ‖ buddhyāśrayam [e]tad yasmi śuci[vṛ]ddhaṃ gātraṃ mama deśe de[śaḥ sa śivasthaḥ] d[urbhikṣa]bhṛ
46 + .[i]vyādhipravimukto muktaś ca vivādaiḥ śānti[ṃ] samupai[tu • ‖] stūpai[ḥ] [śāra]dameghavṛndasadṛś[ai]r ākṣiptas[ā/u]
47 + + + .. .vārkkāṃ[śusahasr]. [śo]dh[i]ta[m]ukh[ai]ḥ padmākar[air] bhūṣitaḥ as[ma]jjan[m]anidhānahe[tu]r iha yaḥ
48 + + sa t[u]lyo mahān āryagrāma udārasaśvacaritaḥ syā[t] svargatu[l]yaḥ sadā ‖ satyāṃbuṃ [bhā/īta]dehaḥ pa[ra]
49 + + ya[ra]tis tyaktasaṃgas titikṣur hiṃsādoṣ[ā]pavṛttaḥ kharapiśunavacovibhramāt [sa]nnivṛtta[ḥ śraddh]ā[dh]ī
50 + + + [s].[e] .i .. [va]canarataḥ prāptasāmya[s] trivarggaḥ [s]au yaṃ ś[ā]rdī[ysav]āsī ciram avikhalita[ḥ] syā
51 + + + + .. rggaḥ ‖๓‖ ṛddhyantāṃ tyāgaśūrāḥ kulabalava .. vai[rī va] yo yāntu nāśa[m*] vardh[y]ant[āṃ]
52 dakṣi[ṇ]ī[y]ā guṇaga .. ni[ca]yaiḥ sasyasaṃpa[tt]ir a[stu :] pūjyaṃtāṃ dhā .[u]ga[rbhā] jva
53 + ... śa/ru + .. dīrgharā[tr]aṃ dhar[mā]tm[ā] dāt[ṛ]rā[jāpra]śamasukhabhuja[ḥ]
54 .. ..ṃ ..

Translation[1]

1. Introductory verse and sūtra

(1-3) Siddham! Victorious is he indeed at first, he who [is endowed] with ten abilities ... who is surrounded by an abundance of light, the illustrious one, [the destroyer?] of darkness in the three worlds ... Moreover, victorious is the dharma-lotus, that which causes the stilling of passion born in one's heart and [also] the noble and foremost one [i.e. the saṅgha], [the preserver?] of the word of the Wise One, possessing a multitude of virtues.

2. Sūtra

(3-5) Thus I have heard at one time when the Blessed One was dwelling at Vārāṇasī, in the deer-park Ṛṣipatana, together with a great community of monks, seven hundred monks and many Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas.

(5-6) Now, the Blessed One dressed himself in the morning, took his begging bowl and [outer-]garments and entered the city of Vārāṇasī together with the venerable Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva Ajita as attending monk (*paścācchramaṇa*) with the intention of obtaining alms.

(7-8) Thereupon, while walking through the city of Vārāṇasī in regular order (*sāvadānam*) with the intention of obtaining alms, the Blessed One arrived at the house of the Brahman woman Śrīmatī, and stood to one side waiting for alms.

(8-12) The Brahman woman Śrīmatī had already seen the Blessed One from a distance: He was gracious, pleasing, with calm senses and of calm mind, being perfectly accomplished in tranquillity and self-restraint and having reached perfection in the highest tranquillity. He was calm, restrained, controlled, blameless and had mastered his senses. He was endowed with the highest excellence of beautiful complexion. He was clear, bright and pure like a lake, upright, unshakable and immovable like a golden sacrificial post, and blazing, shining, radiating and illuminating with his majesty.

(12-17) Her mind was filled with trust on beholding him. With a mind full of trust she approached the Blessed One. And after she had honoured with her head the feet of the Blessed One as well as [the feet] of the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva Ajita, and had then bowed with folded hands in the direction of the Blessed One she said to the Blessed One: "Welcome, Blessed One, welcome, Blessed One! Please sit down on the prepared seat, Blessed One!" The Blessed One and the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva Ajita sat down according to their status.

Then, knowing that the Blessed One and the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva Ajita were comfortably seated, the Brahman woman Śrīmatī bowed with folded hands in the direction of the Blessed One and addressed the Blessed One: (17-19) "Blessed One, I have heard that in the city of Vārāṇasī, in the deer-park Ṛṣipatana, the Wheel of the Doctrine was set in motion by the Blessed One. Blessed One, what kind of doctrine is it that was initiated by the Blessed One?"

(19-23) When the Blessed One was thus addressed, he said to the Brahman woman Śrīmatī: "Śrīmatī, conditioned by ignorance are karmic predispositions; conditioned by karmic predispositions is consciousness; conditioned by consciousness are name and form; conditioned by name and form are the six sense-fields; conditioned by the six sense-fields is contact; conditioned by contact is sensation; conditioned by sensation is craving; conditioned by craving is grasping; conditioned by grasping is coming into being; conditioned by coming into being is birth; conditioned by birth arise old age, death, grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation, and despair. Such is the origin of the whole great mass of suffering.

(23-27) From the cessation of ignorance follows the cessation of karmic predispositions; from the cessation of karmic predispositions follows the cessation of consciousness; from the cessation of consciousness follows the cessation of name and form; from the cessation of name and form follows the cessation of the six sense-fields; from the cessation of the six sense-fields follows the cessation of contact; from the cessation of contact follows the cessation of sensation; from the cessation of sensation follows the cessation of craving; from the cessation of craving follows the cessation of grasping; from the cessation of grasping follows the cessation of coming into being; from the cessation of coming into being follows the cessation of birth; following from the cessation of birth old age, death, grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation, and despair are destroyed. Such is the cessation of the whole great mass of suffering.

(27-29) Śrīmatī, this is the Wheel of the Doctrine, that was set in motion by the Realized One in the city of Vārāṇasī, in the deer park ôṣipatana, not to be set in motion in the right way by a monk or a brahman or a god or a Māra or a Brahmā or anybody else in the world."

(29-30) Thus spoke the Blessed One, and with pleased minds the Brahman woman Śrīmatī and the Bodhisattva Ajita, and the world with its gods, humans, Asuras, and Gandharvas approved of the speech of the Blessed One.

3. Verse quoted from Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ

I salute the supreme teacher, the Fully Awakened One who has taught Dependent Origination, the blessed stilling of conceptual proliferation, free of cessation and origination, of destruction and permanence, of identity and difference, of coming and going.

4. Donation formula

(33-39) In the sixty-eighth year on the seventh day of the bright half of the month Kārttika [corresponding to October-November]: On this day this caitya of the Realized One containing relics (*dhātugarbha*) was established by

1. the lord of a great monastery (*mahāvihārasvāmin*), the son of Opanda, the Tālagānika-Devaputra-Ṣāhi, ...,
2. together with [his] father Opanda,

1 BMSC vol. III, 267-278.

3. together with [his] wife, the daughter of the Sārada-Ṣāhi, [named] Buddh. ...,
4. together with the mistress of a great monastery Arccavāmanā,
5. together with [her] father Ho..gaya,
6. [and] with [her] mother, the queen (*mahādevī*) ...,
7. together with the spiritual friend (*kalyāṇamitra*), the religious teacher (*ācārya*) Ratnāgama,
8. together with the great Ṣāhi (*mahāṣāhi*) Khīṅgīla,
9. together with the god-king (*devarāja*) Toramāna,
10. together with the mistress of a great monastery Sāsā,
11. together with the great Ṣāhi Mehama,
12. together with Sādavīkha,
13. together with the great king (*mahārāja*) Javūkha, the son of Sādavīkha; during the reign of Mehama.

5. Verses of praise and good wishes

Whose stūpas even today light up the earth–mountain-like [stūpas] resembling the colour of white frost, pearl necklaces, white water lilies, crystals and conch-shells, raised high by parasols and possessing railings, with flames made up of waving flags, and worshipped by those who are worthy of being honoured by the three worlds–, one bows down with the head before this Victorious One, He, whose feet are touched by the crowns [i.e. by the rays of jewels on the crowns] of men.

... May the world for you rapidly be freed from sword fights and arrow strikes, [and] soon become equal to the abode of the Brāhma-gods.

May the stūpas by which this earth is filled up, [stūpas] containing relics of the Sugata, who has attained tranquillity, headed by one/those made by Dāmana(?), stand for a Kalpa, as long as the Lord of the Mountains [i.e. Meru], inhabited by the kings of gods.

May that country of mine, in which this pure and exalted body [i.e., the stūpa or the relics], the basis for understanding, is located, remain happy, and be freed from famine, severe illness and diseases, as well as freed from dissension, and attain peace.

[The place] here, which is the reason for our birth, which is adorned with stūpas resembling a multitude of [white] autumn clouds, ..., [and or like] lotus ponds, the surface of which has been purified by thousands of sunrays, ..., may this great village of the noble ones (*āryagrāma*) be constantly frequented by exalted beings [just] like heaven.

May the three castes (*trivarga*) residing in Śārdīysa, who find delight in ..., who have given up clinging, who are patient, have turned away from the fault of violence, desist from the error of [using] harsh and malignant words, of faithful mind, ..., delighting in friendly words, have reached mental balance, ... be long-lastingly unwavering (*aviskhalita*).

May the heroes of renunciation succeed, but may he who is an enemy of the power and strength of the community (*kula*) be destroyed. May those who are worthy of worship prosper in their collection of a host of good deeds. May there be abundance of grains. May the stūpas containing relics be worshipped ... for a long time. [May] the king amongst the donors, one who embodies righteousness, be one who enjoys the happiness of [mental] peace ...

Appendix

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